

Picture This!

Compiled by WSRA's Children's Literature Committee for the 2017 Convention
from titles published between September 2015-December 2016

Committee members dedicate themselves to reading widely to evaluate the newest books published each year, in order to recommend the most interesting and valuable books for educators and children to read.

Submitted and nominated titles are evaluated based on appeal for students and value for classroom use; while representing high-quality literature with a focus on diversity, authenticity, real-world awareness, thought-provoking response, engaging storytelling, artistry of writing craft, and exemplary illustrations.

A Beetle is Shy by Dianna Hutts Aston, illustrated by Sylvia Long (Chronicle Books, 2016).

The award-winning duo of Dianna Hutts Aston and Sylvia Long team up again, this time creating a gorgeous look at the fascinating world of beetles. From flea beetles to bombardier beetles, an incredible variety of these beloved bugs are showcased here in all their splendor. Poetic in voice and elegant in design, this carefully researched and visually striking book is perfect for sparking children's imaginations in both classroom reading circles and home libraries.

A Big Surprise for Little Card by Charise Mericle Harper, illustrated by Anna Raff (Candlewick Press, 2016).

In the world of cards, each one has a special job to do. But is any card as lucky as Little Card? He's going to school to become a birthday card — in other words, to sing, play games, eat cake, and be happy all day long. Offbeat and utterly endearing, this tale of a little guy who gives it all he's got is complete with a sweet twist and a surprise ending.

A Child of Books by Oliver Jeffers, illustrated by Sam Winston (Candlewick Press, 2016).

New York Times best-selling author-illustrator Oliver Jeffers and fine artist Sam Winston deliver a lyrical picture book inspiring readers of all ages to create, to question, to explore, and to imagine. *A Child of Books* is a stunning prose poem on the rewards of reading and sharing stories—an immersive and unforgettable reading experience that readers will want to pass on to others.

A Hungry Lion, or A Dwindling Assortment of Animals by Lucy Ruth Cummings (Atheneum, 2016).

Once upon a time there was a hungry lion and a bunch of adorable animals... what do you think happened next? With sharp wit, adorable illustrations, and hysterical twists galore, this debut picture book asks—what do you think happened to the hungry lion's friends?

A Piece of Home by Jeri Hanel Watts, illustrated by Hyewon Yum (Candlewick Press, 2016).

When Hee Jun's family moves from Korea to West Virginia, he struggles to adjust to his new home. Lyrical prose and lovely illustrations combine in a gentle, realistic story about finding connections in an unfamiliar world.

A Tiger Tail: (or What Happened to Anya on Her First Day of School) by Mike Boldt (Simon & Schuster, 2016).

Anya wakes up to discover that she has grown a tiger tail. Yes, a striped tiger tail. It also happens to be the first day of school. What will the other kids think? Are girls with tiger tails even allowed to go to school?! Anya is about to find out.

A Unicorn Named Sparkle by Amy Young (Farrar Straus Giroux, 2016).

When Lucy sees an ad in the newspaper for a unicorn, she sends in her twenty-five cents and waits four to six long weeks for her very own unicorn to arrive. She imagines the flowers that she'll braid into his beautiful pink mane, and she even picks the perfect name for him: Sparkle. But when Sparkle arrives, his ears are too long, his horn is too short, he smells funny--and oh, he has fleas. Lucy isn't pleased, but in the end she warms up to Sparkle and realizes that even though he wasn't exactly the unicorn she wanted, he might be just the one she needs.

* indicates committee favorite

^^Annotations taken from publisher information or Follett Titlewave.

ABC Dream by Kim Krans (Random House, 2016).

This stunning and innovative alphabet picture book will dazzle little ones and engage the adults who share it with them! Each page is dedicated to a letter, and clever alliterations are packed into each ink-and-watercolor spread. This gem comes to us from Kim Krans, the creator of The Wild Unknown: a lifestyle website offering prints, calendars, and more.

Ada Byron Lovelace and the Thinking Machine by Laurie Wallmark, illustrated by April Chu (Creston Books, 2016).

Ada Lovelace, the daughter of the famous romantic poet, Lord Byron, develops her creativity through science and math. When she meets Charles Babbage, the inventor of the first mechanical computer, Ada understands the machine better than anyone else and writes the world's first computer program in order to demonstrate its capabilities.

Ada's Violin: The Story of the Recycled Orchestra of Paraguay by Susan Hood, illustrated by Sally Wern Comport (Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2016).

An extraordinary true tale of the Recycled Orchestra of Paraguay, an orchestra made up of children playing instruments built from recycled trash.

Also an Octopus by Maggie Tokuda-Hall, illustrated by Benji Davies (Candlewick Press, 2016).

It begins with an octopus who plays the ukulele. Then the octopus sets out to build a spaceship out of soda cans, glue, umbrellas, glitter, and waffles. This author sets up an endearingly funny story, then hands the baton to readers, who will be more than primed to take it away.

****Always Remember*** by Cece Meng, illustrated by Jago (Philomel, 2016).

After Old Turtle swims his last swim and breathes his last breath, and the waves gently take him away, his friends lovingly remember how he impacted each and every one of them. As the sea animals think back on how much better Old Turtle made their lives and their world, they realize that he is not truly gone, because his memory and legacy will last forever.

Apples and Robins by Lucie Felix (Chronicle Books, 2016).

All you need for apples . . . are circles and the color red. In this extraordinary book, one thing transforms into another as each page turns--a circle becomes an apple, an oval becomes a bird, winter becomes spring. This book is full of the magic of shape, color, and imagination. All you need to do . . . is turn the page.

Be a Friend by Salina Yoon (Bloomsbury, 2016).

Dennis is an ordinary boy who expresses himself in extraordinary ways. Some children do show-and-tell. Dennis mimes his. Some children climb trees. Dennis is happy to BE a tree . . . But being a mime can be lonely. It isn't until Dennis meets a girl named Joy that he discovers the power of friendship--and how special he truly is! At its core, this book is a heartwarming story of self-acceptance, courage, and unbreakable friendship for anyone who has ever felt "different."

Bear is NOT Tired by Ciara Gavin (Alfred A. Knopf, 2016).

Bear and his duck family do everything together. That is, until winter arrives. Bear is supposed to hibernate this time of year, but he doesn't want to miss out on any of the fun. But can Bear really stay awake all winter long?

Beard in a Box by Bill Cotter (Alfred A. Knopf, 2016).

A young boy longs for a beard like Dad's, and when he discovers a hair-growth product called Beard in a Box, he must have it! He rips open the package, plants the beard seeds, and waits . . . And waits . . . And waits. Hilarious art and a feel-good ending make this the perfect Father's Day gift for bearded and clean-shaven readers alike!

* indicates committee favorite

^^Annotations taken from publisher information or Follett Titlewave.

Best in Snow by April Pulley Sayre (Simon & Schuster, 2016).

With gorgeous photo illustrations, award-winning author April Pulley Sayre sheds sparkly new light on the wonders of snow. From the beauty of snow blanketing the forest and falling on animals' fur and feathers to the fascinating winter water cycle, this nonfiction picture book celebrates snowfall and the amazing science behind it.

Counting Lions: Portraits from the Wild by Katie Cotton, illustrated by Stephen Walton (Candlewick Press, 2015).

Exquisite charcoal drawings of ten endangered creatures—lions, elephants, giraffes, pandas, tigers, chimpanzees, penguins, turtles, macaws, and zebras—startle the viewer with their size and astonishing detail. A poetic text notes each creature's particular qualities and behavior, while providing a quiet counting exercise and a reminder that these animals must be cherished and protected.

Daniel Finds a Poem by Micha Archer (Nancy Paulsen Books, 2016).

A little boy's animal friends help him discover the poetry to be found in nature.

Dear Dragon by Josh Funk, illustrated by Rodolfo Montalvo (Viking, 2016).

As a school project, George and Blaise become pen pals, writing rhyming letters about their favorite things to do, unaware that one is human and the other a dragon.

Dorothea's Eyes: Dorothea Lange Photographs The Truth by Barb Rosenstock, illustrated by Gerard DuBois (Calkins Creek, 2016).

Describes how Dorothea Lange knew she wanted to become a photographer at an early age and pursued her dream as she focused her lens on the previously unseen victims of the Great Depression.

Echo Echo: Reverso Poems About Greek Myths by Marilyn Singer, illustrated by Josee Masse (Dial, 2016).

A collection of short poems which, when reversed, provide new perspectives on the Greek myths they feature.

****Explorers of the Wild*** by Cale Atkinson (Disney Hyperion, 2016).

Boy and Bear both love to explore the outdoors. There are so many neat things to see, and so many strange things to find. These explorers are prepared for anything. except each other! When Bear and Boy meet in the woods, they're scared at first. Really scared. But soon, these kings of the wild realise that no mountain is too big to conquer if you have a friend to climb it by your side.

Flora and the Peacocks by Molly Idle (Chronicle Books, 2016).

In this wordless book with interactive flaps, a little girl named Flora forms a friendship with two peacocks as the three learn to dance together.

Frank and Lucky Get Schooled by Lynne Rae Perkins (Greenwillow, 2016).

A boy and his dog learn about each other, go to school to learn more, then explore the world around them as they study science, geography and even foreign languages together.

Freedom in Congo Square by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by R. Gregory Christie (Little Bee Books, 2016).

Chronicles slaves' duties each day, from chopping logs on Mondays to baking bread on Wednesdays to plucking hens on Saturday, and builds to the freedom of Sundays and the special experience of an afternoon spent in Congo Square.

Freedom Over Me: Eleven Slaves, Their Lives and Dreams Brought to Life by Ashley Bryan (Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy Books, 2016).

Using original slave auction and plantation estate documents, contrasts the monetary value of a slave with the priceless value of life experiences and dreams that a slave owner could never take away.

* indicates committee favorite

^^Annotations taken from publisher information or Follett Titlewave.

Giant Squid by Candace Flemming, illustrated by Eric Rohmann (Macmillan, 2016).

The giant squid is one of the most elusive creatures in the world. As large as whales, they hide beyond reach deep within the sea, forcing scientists to piece together their story from those clues they leave behind. In this beautiful and clever nonfiction picture book about the giant squid, the author explores, both visually and poetically, this hidden creature's mysterious life.

Glow: Animals With Their Own Night-Lights by W. H. Beck (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015).

Text and illustrations introduce animals that glow, exploring what makes them "light" up, their habitat and the adaptations they have made, how they communicate, and more.

Grandad's Island by Benji Davies (Candlewick Press, 2016).

Syd loves his grandfather, no matter how far away they are from each other. Sure to provide comfort to young children struggling to understand loss, Benji Davies's tale is a sensitive and beautiful reminder that our loved ones live on in our memories long after they're gone.

Hannah and Sugar by Kate Berube (Abrams, 2016).

Every day after school, Hannah's school bus is greeted by her classmate's dog, Sugar. All of the other kids love Sugar, but Hannah just can't conquer her fear of dogs. Then, one day, Sugar goes missing, so Hannah joins the search with her classmates. Will Hannah find a way to be brave, and make a new friend in the process?

Have You Seen Elephant? by David Barrow (Gecko Press, 2016).

Elephant wants to play hide and seek. See if you can help the others find him--he's very good at hiding! This tale of absurdity is perfect for sharing with children who will love finding Elephant (and being faster at it than the boy in the book!). Watch out for the dog and the tortoise, too...

Hello, My Name is Octicorn by Kevin Diller, Illustrated by Justin Lowe (Balzer & Bray, 2016).

The octicorn--half octopus and half unicorn--introduces himself and tells readers why, though strange and unique, octicorns make great friends.

Henry & Leo by Pamela Zagarenski (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016).

Leo isn't just a stuffed toy, he is Henry's best friend and brother. But when the two are accidentally separated, no one in Henry's family believes Leo is real enough to find his way home. This book explores the transcendent nature of friendship and love.

How to Find Gold by Viviane Schwarz (Candlewick Press, 2016).

Finding gold isn't easy. In fact it's dangerous and difficult. It requires planning. First, Crocodile and Anna practice their secret-keeping faces. Together, they draw the whole world, with an X to mark the spot. What will they discover? The joy of sharing a journey with a friend outshines even the longed-for gold in this fanciful story brimming with humor.

I Am Jane Goodall by Brad Meltzer, illustrated by Christopher Eliopoulos (Penguin, 2016).

Includes bibliographical references. An illustrated look at the life and work of zoologist Jane Goodall. A significant historical figure, told in a simple, conversational, vivacious way, and always focusing on a character trait that makes the person a role model for kids.

I Really Like Slop by Mo Willems (Hyperion, 2015).

Gerald and Piggie are best friends. Piggie invites Gerald to try her favorite food . . . slop. But Gerald is not so sure he's going to like it. At all.

****Ida, Always*** by Caron Levis, illustrated by Charles Santoso (Atheneum, 2016).

A polar bear grieves over the loss of his companion, based on the real-life Gus and Ida of New York's Central Park Zoo.

* indicates committee favorite

^^Annotations taken from publisher information or Follett Titlewave.

***Jazz Day: The Making of a Famous Photograph** by Roxane Orgil, illustrated by Francis Vallejo (Candlewick Press, 2016).

What happens when you invite as many jazz musicians as you can to pose for a photo in 1950s Harlem? Playful verse and glorious artwork capture an iconic moment for American jazz.

La Madre Goose: Nursery Rhymes for Los Ninos by Susan Middleton Elya, illustrated by Juana Martinez-Neal (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2016).

Classic Mother Goose rhymes get a Latino twist in this cozy collection. From young Juan sitting to the three little gatitos who lost their mitoncitos, readers will be delighted to see familiar characters in vibrant, luminous scenes brimming with fanciful details.

Let Me Finish by Minh Le, illustrated by Isabel Roxas (Disney Hyperion, 2016).

A young boy wants to read his favorite books without interruption, but the creatures around him keep spoiling the ending!

Little Bot and Sparrow by Jake Parker (Macmillan, 2016).

When Little Bot is thrown out with the garbage, he finds himself in a strange new world. Fortunately, Sparrow is there to take him under her wing. Together, they explore the forest, share adventures, and learn what it means to be forever friends.

Little Elliot, Big Fun by Mike Curato (Henry Holt and Company, 2016).

Elliot the little elephant is terrified when his friend Mouse introduces him to the carnival, but Mouse helps him to have fun.

Little One by Jo Weaver (Peachtree, 2016).

Follows a new bear cub and his mother as they discover the world together, through every season.

Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell, illustrated by Rafael Lopez (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016).

What good can a splash of color do in a community of gray? As Mira and her neighbors discover, more than you might ever imagine! Based on the true story of the Urban Art Trail in San Diego, California, *Maybe Something Beautiful* reveals how art can inspire transformation.

Monster Needs Your Vote by Paul Czajak, illustrated by Wendy Grieb (Mighty Media Kids, 2015).

Election season is here and Monster is ready to vote! But why cast your ballot when you can run for president instead? With speeches, debates, and a soapbox or two, Monster's newest tale is a campaign encouraging kids to take a stand and fight for what they believe in.

***Mother Bruce** by Ryan T. Higgins (Disney Hyperion, 2015).

Bruce the bear likes to keep to himself. That, and eat eggs. But when his hard-boiled goose eggs turn out to be real, live goslings, he starts to lose his appetite. And even worse, the goslings are convinced he's their mother. Bruce tries to get the geese to go south, but he can't seem to rid himself of his new companions. What's a bear to do?

My Favorite Pets: by Gus W. for Ms. Smolinski's Class by Jeanne Birdsall, illustrated by Harry Bliss (Alfred A. Knopf, 2016).

In his homework assignment, Gus spends less time on what he likes about sheep and more on how he has gotten in trouble doing such things as using a sheep as an umbrella, or letting sheep into his house.

***My Friend Maggie** by Hannah E. Harrison (Dial, 2016).

Paula and Maggie are best friends until Paula starts playing with some new friends instead, but when her new playmates turn on her, it's Maggie who rushes to Paula's defense.

* indicates committee favorite

^^Annotations taken from publisher information or Follett Titlewave.

My Heart Fills With Happiness by Monique Gray Smith, illustrated by Julie Flett (Orca Book Publishers, 2016).
The sun on your face. The smell of warm bannock baking in the oven. Holding the hand of someone you love. What fills your heart with happiness? This beautiful board book serves as a reminder for little ones and adults alike to reflect on and cherish the moments in life that bring us joy.

Nanette's Baguette by Mo Willems (Disney Book Group, 2016).
This book follows our plucky heroine on her first big solo trip to the bakery. But...will Nanette get the baguette from baker Juliette? Or will Nanette soon be beset with regret?

Normal Norman by Tara Lazar, illustrated by S. Britt (Sterling Children's Books, 2016).
What is 'normal?' That's the question an eager young scientist, narrating her very first book, hopes to answer. Unfortunately, her exceedingly 'normal' subject--an orangutan named Norman--turns out to be exceptionally strange. He speaks English, sleeps in a bed, loves his stuffed toy, goes bananas over pizza, and even deep-sea dives! Oh, no: what's a 'normal' scientist to do? A humorous look at the wackiness that makes us all special-- and a gentle reminder that 'normal' can't ever be defined!

Oh No, Astro! by Matt Roeser, illustrated by Brad Woodard (Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2016).
Astro, an asteroid that wants nothing more than for his personal outer space to be respected, is hit by a passing satellite and sent on what turns out to be a great adventure from the asteroid belt to Earth.

Oskar and the Eight Blessings by Tanya Simon, illustrated by Mark Siegel (Roaring Brook Press, 2015).
A young Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany arrives in New York City on the seventh night of Hanukkah and receives small acts of kindness while exploring the city.

Penguin Problems by Jory John, illustrated by Lane Smith (Random House, 2016).
Being a penguin is no picnic -- and this little guy is here to tell you why! It seems there is no escaping the drudgery of the daily grind, whatever it might be. This book is sure to tickle kids' funny bones and will elicit appreciative sighs from the adults reading it aloud.

****Pink is for Blobfish: Discovering the World's Perfectly Pink Animals*** by Jess Keating, illustrated by David DeGrand (Alfred A. Knopf, 2016).
Pinkalicious meets National Geographic in this nonfiction picture book introducing the weirdest, wildest, pinkest critters in the animal kingdom!

Please, Open This Book! Adam Lehrhaupt, illustrated by Matthew Forsythe (Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers).
In *Warning, Do Not Open This Book!*, turning these pages meant increased chaos and delight. Now the tables have turned, and opening the book is the only way to save the group of monkeys who are trapped between its pages. This irresistibly entertaining rescue effort puts power in the hands of the page-turner, and giggles into everyone!

Poor Little Guy by Elana Allen (Dial, 2016).
What do you do when you're so tiny that the bigger ocean creatures think you might even taste adorable? Told with wit, a wink, and a delightfully dark sense of humor, Poor Little Guy celebrates the very smallest...and all of their giant victories.

Quackers by liz Wong (Alfred A. Knopf, 2016).
Quackers has always believed that he is a duck, but when he meets new friends who look like him and call themselves cats, he has to find a way to combine the best of both worlds.

* indicates committee favorite

^^Annotations taken from publisher information or Follett Titlewave.

Quit Calling Me a Monster by Jory John, illustrated by Bob Shea (Random House, 2016).

Floyd Peterson is so much more than shaggy purple fur and pointy monster teeth--why can't people just see him for him? Jory John and Bob Shea have struck gold in creating a knee-slapping, read-it-again story that will start a valuable discussion about how we treat others and how it feels to be seen as "different."

Saved by the Boats: The Heroic Sea Evacuation of September 11 by Julie Gassman, illustrated by Steve Moors (Capstone Young Readers, 2016).

September 11, 2001 was a black day in U.S. history. Amid the chaos, sea captains and crews raced by boat to the tragic Manhattan scene. Nearly 500,000 people on Manhattan Island were rescued that day in what would later be called the largest sea evacuation in history. In this rarely told story of heroism, we come to understand that in our darkest hours, people shine brightly as a beacon of hope.

****School's First Day of School*** by Adam Rex (Roaring Book Press, 2016).

It's the first day of school at Frederick Douglass Elementary and everyone's just a little bit nervous, especially the school itself. What will the children do once they come? Will they like the school? Will they be nice to him? The school has a rough start, but as the day goes on, he soon recovers when he sees that he's not the only one going through first-day jitters.

****Seven Tons of Steel*** by Janet Nolan, illustrated by Thomas Gonzalez (Peachtree, 2016).

There is a ship, a navy ship. It is called the USS New York. It is big like other navy ships, and it sails like other navy ships, but there is something special about the USS New York. Following the events of September 11, 2001, the governor of New York gave the Navy a steel beam that was once inside one of the World Trade Towers. The beam was driven from New York to a foundry in Louisiana. Metal workers heated the beam to a high, high temperature. Chippers and grinders, painters and polishers worked on the beam for months. And then, seven and a half tons of steel, which had once been a beam in the World Trade Center, became a navy ship's bow. This powerful story reveals how something remarkable can emerge from a devastating event.

Shape Shift by Joyce Hesselberth (Henry Holt and Company, 2016).

Round, curvy, pointy, or straight-shapes are all around us. With vibrant illustrations that highlight shapes in all their forms, this informative book reinforces the identification of circles, squares, crescents, diamonds, triangles, rectangles, trapezoids, and ovals while encouraging kids to pair shapes together to make new forms.

Shy by Deborah Freedman (Viking, 2016).

Shy loves birds. He'd love to watch them fly and hear them sing, but he's only ever read about them in books. . . until a real bird comes along. He's dying to meet her, but there's just one problem: Shy is, well, shy--so shy, in fact, that he's afraid to leave the gutter of the book. Can Shy overcome his fears and venture out onto the page?

Solving the Puzzle Under the Sea: Marie Tharp Maps the Ocean Floor by Robert Burleigh, illustrated by Raul Colon (Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2016).

Tells the story of oceanographic cartographer Marie Tharp and her work charting the ocean floor.

****Steamboat School*** by Deborah Hopkins, illustrated by Ron Husband (Disney Hyperion, 2016).

When James started school his sister practically had to drag him there - he knew everything outside was more exciting than anything he'd find inside. Until his teacher taught him otherwise. 'We make our own light here,' Reverend Meachum told James. And through hard work, they did - until their school was shut down by a new law forbidding African American education in Missouri. Determined to continue teaching his students, Reverend Meachum decided to build a new school - a floating school in the Mississippi River, just outside the boundary of the unjust law.

* indicates committee favorite

^^Annotations taken from publisher information or Follett Titlewave.

Strictly No Elephants by Lisa Mantchev, illustrated by Taeun Yoo (Paula Wiseman, 2015).

When the local Pet Club won't admit a boy's tiny pet elephant, he finds a solution—one that involves all kinds of unusual animals in this sweet and adorable picture book. Today is Pet Club day. There will be cats and dogs and fish, but strictly no elephants are allowed. The Pet Club doesn't understand that pets come in all shapes and sizes, just like friends. Now it is time for a boy and his tiny pet elephant to show them what it means to be a true friend. Imaginative and lyrical, this sweet story captures the magic of friendship and the joy of having a pet.

Super Jumbo by Fred Koehler (Dial, 2016).

Little Jumbo works tirelessly to be a superhero in his neighborhood, although not everyone appreciates his crime fighting techniques.

Tell Me a Tattoo Story by Alison McGhee, illustrated by Eliza Wheeler (Chronicle Books, 2016).

A bestselling author-illustrator duo join forces to create a modern father-son love story. The father tells his little son the story behind each of his tattoos, and together they go on a beautiful journey through family history. There's a tattoo from a favorite book his mother used to read him, one from something his father used to tell him, and one from the longest trip he ever took. And there is a little heart with numbers inside--which might be the best tattoo of them all. Tender pictures by New York Times bestselling illustrator Eliza Wheeler complement this lovely ode to all that's indelible--ink and love.

The Airport Book by Lisa Brown (Roaring Brook Press, 2016).

Follow a family and the youngest member's favorite sock monkey through all the inner and outer workings of an airport. In a book that is as intriguing as it is useful and entertaining, we follow a family on its way through the complexities of a modern-day airport. From checking bags and watching them disappear on the mysterious conveyor belt, to security clearance and a seemingly endless wait at the gate to finally being airborne. But wait! There's more! The youngest family member's sock monkey has gone missing. Follow it at the bottom of the page as it makes a journey as memorable as that of the humans above.

****The Bear and the Piano*** by David Litchfield (Clarion, 2016).

One day, a bear cub finds something strange and wonderful in the forest. When he touches the keys, they make a horrible noise. Yet he is drawn back again and again. Eventually, he learns to play beautiful sounds, delighting his woodland friends. Then the bear is invited to share his sounds with new friends in the city. He longs to explore the world beyond his home, and to play bigger and better than before. But he knows that if he leaves, the other bears will be very sad . . . This gorgeously illustrated tale of following one's dreams reminds us of the value of friendship, wherever we go.

The Bear Report by Thyra Heder (Abrams, 2016).

Sophie is uninterested in writing a research report on polar bears until a polar bear named Olafur swoops her away to the Arctic, where she learns all about the playful bear's habits and habitat, from glacier mice to Northern Lights.

The Kid From Diamond Street: The Extraordinary Story of Baseball Legend Edith Houghton by Audrey Vernick, illustrated by Steven Salerno (Clarion Books, 2016).

Audrey Vernick and Steven Salerno have again collaborated to bring us a captivating picture book about a compelling but little-known piece of baseball history. Beginning in 1922, when Edith Houghton was only ten years old, she tried out for a women's professional baseball team, the Philadelphia Bobbies. Though she was the smallest on the field, soon reporters were talking about "The Kid" and her incredible skill, and crowds were packing the stands to see her play. Her story reminds us that baseball has never been about just men and boys. Baseball is also about talented girls willing to work hard to play any way they can.

The Knowing Book by Rebecca Kai Dotlich, illustrated by Matthew Cordell (Boyd's Mills Press, 2016).

Inspiring and wise, this story begins and ends with the sky that is always above you. In between, a young rabbit travels through the wide world, experiencing joy and sorrow and all the wonder that the world has to offer. Along

* indicates committee favorite

^^Annotations taken from publisher information or Follett Titlewave.

the way he chooses a path, explores the unknown, and ventures along trails on and off the map. And at the end of the journey, braver and more confident, he returns home, the place he can always count on and will always know. This beautiful celebration of life is the perfect gift to mark any milestone in a child's life from birth to graduation.

****The Night Gardener*** by Terry and Eric Fan (Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2016).

One day, William discovers that the tree outside his window has been sculpted into a wise owl. In the following days, more topiaries appear, and each one is more beautiful than the last. Soon, William's gray little town is full of color and life. And though the mysterious night gardener disappears as suddenly as he appeared, William—and his town—are changed forever.

****The Only Child*** by Guoing (Schwartz & Wade, 2015).

In this wordless graphic novel, a young girl traveling from her city apartment to her grandmother's country home becomes lost and enters a fantastical world in the clouds.

The Princess and the Warrior: A Tale of Two Volcanoes by Duncan Tonatiuh (Abrams, 2016).

Award-winning author Duncan Tonatiuh reimagines one of Mexico's cherished legends. Princess Izta had many wealthy suitors but dismissed them all. When a mere warrior, Popoca, promised to be true to her and stay always by her side, Izta fell in love. The emperor promised Popoca if he could defeat their enemy Jaguar Claw, then Popoca and Izta could wed. When Popoca was near to defeating Jaguar Claw, his opponent sent a messenger to Izta saying Popoca was dead. Izta fell into a deep sleep and, upon his return, even Popoca could not wake her. As promised Popoca stayed by her side. So two volcanoes were formed: Iztacchuatl, who continues to sleep, and Popocatpetl, who spews ash and smoke, trying to wake his love.

The Secret Subway by Shana Corey, illustrated by Red Nose Studio (Schwartz & Wade, 2016).

From an acclaimed author and a New York Times Best Illustrated artist comes the fascinating, little-known--and true!--story of New York City's first subway. New York City in the 1860s was a mess: crowded, disgusting, filled with garbage. You see, way back in 1860, there were no subways, just cobblestone streets. That is, until Alfred Ely Beach had the idea for a fan-powered train that would travel underground. On February 26, 1870, after fifty-eight days of drilling and painting and plastering, Beach unveiled his masterpiece--and throngs of visitors took turns swooshing down the track.

The Story of Snowflake and Inkdrop by Pierdomenico Baccalario, Alessandro Gatti, illustrated by Simona Mulazzani (Enchanted Lion Books, 2015).

A big town in winter. A snowflake is about to fall from the sky. A big town in winter. An ink drop flies out of its bottle into the sky when a big gust of wind blows its bottle over. The wind carries Snowflake and Inkdrop through the sky. Where will each land? Two worlds, two intersecting stories told in vivid color illustrations, as well as through ingenious laser cuts and foldouts that are full of surprise. A snowflake and an ink drop - can you imagine a more unlikely couple of friends? And yet, might it be that they are destined for each other-- more kindred in spirit than their differences would suggest?

The Thank You Book by Mo Willems (Disney Hyperion, 2016).

Gerald is careful. Piggie is not.

Piggie cannot help smiling. Gerald can.

Gerald worries so that Piggie does not have to.

Gerald and Piggie are best friends.

In *The Thank You Book!*, Piggie wants to thank EVERYONE. But Gerald is worried Piggie will forget someone . . . someone important.

****The Water Princess*** by Georgie Badiel & Susan Verde, illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds (G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2016).

Based on the childhood experience of Georgie Badiel. The story of one young girl's quest to bring clean drinking water to her African village

* indicates committee favorite

^^Annotations taken from publisher information or Follett Titlewave.

The William Hoy Story: How a Deaf Baseball Player Changed the Game by Nancy Churnin, illustrated by Jez Tuya (Albert Whitman & Company, 2016).

All William Ellsworth Hoy wanted to do was play baseball. After losing out on a spot on the local deaf team, William practiced even harder--eventually earning a position on a professional team. But his struggle was far from over. In addition to the prejudice Hoy faced, he could not hear the umpires' calls. One day he asked the umpire to use hand signals: strike, ball, out. That day he not only got on base, but also changed the way the game was played forever. William "Dummy" Hoy became one of the greatest and most beloved players of his time!

They All Saw a Cat by Brendan Wenzel (Chronicle Books, 2016).

The cat walked through the world, with its whiskers, ears, and paws . . . In this glorious celebration of observation, curiosity, and imagination, Brendan Wenzel shows us the many lives of one cat, and how perspective shapes what we see. When you see a cat, what do you see?

This is Not a Picture Book! by Sergio Ruzzier (Chronicle Books, 2016).

In this quirky yet sweet picture book about the joy and power of reading, Duck learns that even books without pictures can be fun. While he and his friend Bug may struggle at first to decipher their book, they stick with it, and before long they discover that not only can they read it, but it deserves a place on the shelf with all their favorite picture books. Author-artist Sergio Ruzzier has created a fanciful tribute to books of all kinds. It includes both words AND pictures.

****Thunder Boy Jr.*** by Sherman Alexie, illustrated by Yuyi Morales (Little Brown, 2016).

Thunder Boy Jr. is named after his dad, but he wants a name that's all his own. Just because people call his dad Big Thunder doesn't mean he wants to be Little Thunder. He wants a name that celebrates something cool he's done, like Touch the Clouds, Not Afraid of Ten Thousand Teeth, or Full of Wonder. But just when Thunder Boy Jr. thinks all hope is lost, he and his dad pick the perfect name...a name that is sure to light up the sky.

Tree: A Peek-Through Picture Book by Britta Teckentrup (Doubleday, 2016).

Through a hole in the book's cover, an owl invites you inside to meet a majestic tree and all its forest inhabitants during the changing seasons. With clever peekaboo holes throughout, each page reveals a new set of animals playing and living in the tree--baby bears frolicking in the spring, bees buzzing around apples in the summer, squirrels storing nuts in the fall, and finally the lone owl keeping warm during the winter chill--until another year begins. . . .

Use Your Imagination by Nicola O'Byrne (Nosy Crow, 2015).

Rabbit is bored. What shall he do? Luckily, Wolf has the perfect solution. "Why not write a story?" he suggests. Rabbit thinks this is a great idea! And so Wolf teaches Rabbit to use his imagination to create the perfect story with lots of exciting props and interesting characters. Rabbit is desperate to know what happens next when it suddenly becomes clear that Wolf is very hungry—uh-oh, so that's how the story ends. But Wolf hasn't reckoned on Rabbit's excellent imagination. . . .

Violet and Victor Write The Most Fabulous Fairy Tale by Alice Kuipers, illustrated by Bethanie Deeney Murguia (Little Brown and Company, 2016).

Twins Violet and Victor write a fairy tale together, with Violet contributing a castle, a princess, and unicorns and Victor adding a fairy tale-hating witch and a bevy of Australian animals.

We Found a Hat by Jon Klassen (Candlewick Press, 2016).

Two turtles have found a hat. The hat looks good on both of them. But there are two turtles. And there is only one hat. . . . Evoking hilarity and sympathy, the shifting eyes tell the tale in this brilliantly paced story in three parts, highlighting Jon Klassen's visual comedy and deceptive simplicity. The delicious buildup takes an unexpected turn that is sure to please loyal fans and newcomers alike.

* indicates committee favorite

^^Annotations taken from publisher information or Follett Titlewave.

Wet Cement: A Mix of Concrete Poems by Bob Raczka (Roaring Brook Press, 2016).

Who says words need to be concrete? This collection shapes poems in surprising and delightful ways. Concrete poetry is a perennially popular poetic form because they are fun to look at. But by using the arrangement of the words on the page to convey the meaning of the poem, concrete or shape poems are also easy to write! From the author of the incredibly inventive *Lemonade: And Other Poems Squeezed from a Single Word* comes another clever collection that shows kids how to look at words and poetry in a whole new way.

What Do You Do With a Problem? by Kobi Yamada, illustrated by Mae Besom (Compendium, 2016).

This is the story of a persistent problem and the child who isn't so sure what to make of it. The longer he avoids the problem, the bigger it seems to get. But when the child finally musters up the courage to face it, the problem turns out to be something quite different indeed.

When Green Becomes Tomatoes by Julie Fogliano, illustrated by Julie Morstad (Roaring Brook Press, 2016).

Flowers blooming in sheets of snow make way for happy frogs dancing in the rain. Summer swims move over for autumn sweaters until the snow comes back again. In Julie Fogliano's skilled hand and illustrated by Julie Morstad's charming pictures, the seasons come to life in this gorgeous and comprehensive book of poetry.

Whoosh! Lonnie Johnson's Super-Soaking Stream of Inventions by Chris Barton, illustrated by Don Tate (Charlesbridge, 2016).

A cool idea with a big splash. You know the Super Soaker. It's one of top twenty toys of all time. And it was invented entirely by accident. Trying to create a new cooling system for refrigerators and air conditioners, impressive inventor Lonnie Johnson instead created the mechanics for the iconic toy. A love for rockets, robots, inventions, and a mind for creativity began early in Lonnie Johnson's life. Growing up in a house full of brothers and sisters, persistence and a passion for problem solving became the cornerstone for a career as an engineer and his work with NASA. But it is his invention of the Super Soaker water gun that has made his most memorable splash with kids and adults.

Whose Eye Am I? by Shelley Rotner (Holiday House, 2016).

"Who am I?" ask captions alongside close-ups of colorful animal eyes. As readers guess which animal belongs to each eye, they will discover that each animal has a unique and amazing way of seeing. Snakes have clear eyelids that cannot ever open or close. Some sea creatures have hundreds of eyes around the edges of their shells. Many animals can see colors that are invisible to humans. Brimming with vivid and engaging photographs, this book also includes a clear explanation of how human eyes work, a labeled diagram of a human eye, a glossary and an index.

Whose Hands Are These? A Community Helper Guessing Book By Miranda Paul, illustrated by Luciana Navarro Powell (Millbrook Press, 2016).

If your hands can mix and mash, what job might you have? What if your hands reach, wrench, yank, and crank? The hands in this book--and the people attached to them--do all sorts of helpful work. And together, these helpers make their community a safe and fun place to live. As you read, keep an eye out for community members who make repeat appearances! Can you guess all the jobs based on the actions of these busy hands?

Will's Words: How William Shakespeare Changed the Way You Talk by Jane Sutcliffe, illustrated by John Shelley (Charlesbridge, 2016).

When Jane Sutcliffe sets out to write a book about William Shakespeare and the Globe Theatre, in her own words, she runs into a problem: Will's words keep popping up all over the place! What's an author to do? After all, Will is responsible for such familiar phrases as "what's done is done" and "too much of a good thing." He even helped turn "household words" into household words. Backmatter includes an author's note, a bibliography, and a timeline.

* indicates committee favorite

^^Annotations taken from publisher information or Follett Titlewave.

Woodpecker Wants a Waffle by Steve Breen (Harper, 2016).

One day Benny the woodpecker awakens to the best tummy-rumbling smell ever and discovers it's something called waffles. He must taste them! He pecks on the door of the waffle house, but he gets the boot. He tries to sneak in, but he gets swept away. Each time Benny tries, he just can't seem to get to those delicious waffles. The other forest animals laugh at him: "Woodpeckers don't eat waffles!" they say. But Benny has a brilliant plan. . . . Steve Breen has created a delightful picture book with pitch-perfect humor and tons of visual gags that will keep readers coming back for more!

Yaks Yak Animal Word Pairs by Linda Sue Park, illustrated by Jennifer Black Reinhardt (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016).

At once funny and informative, *Yaks Yak* presents animals acting out the verbs made from their names. Illustrations rich in comic details show hogs hogging, slugs slugging, and other spirited creatures demonstrating homographs, words with different meanings that are spelled and pronounced the same. A chart listing the words, their meanings, and their history is included. Ideal for sharing, this book offers a sprightly and fanciful introduction to a fun form of wordplay.

You're Here For a Reason by Nancy Tillman (Feiwel and Friends, 2015).

Every person matters. Here, national-best-selling and beloved author Nancy Tillman shows readers how each of us fits into life's big picture, and how the world would be incomplete without you in it.

* indicates committee favorite

^^Annotations taken from publisher information or Follett Titlewave.