

SPACER

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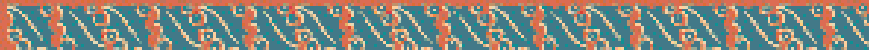
Christian Library

J O U R N A L



THIS ISSUE FEATURES:

- Living the Story to Give It Life: Profile of Peggy King Anderson
- Lindisfarne Legacy: the Writing of David Adams
- Get published: earn prize money
- Pets: Check It Out : Home Schoolers Use Their Public Library
- The Challenging Child: Book Nook
- Reading the Right Stuff: Choosing Kids to Choose Wisely
- Big Game Hunting: Using Games to Snare Young Writers





A Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

As I spent time this fall speaking and exhibiting at conferences, many times fellow librarians came to ask advice about automating their libraries. I also receive many calls about this difficult task. These questions take me back to my first experiences with automation, when choices were few and most of us did not know what were the important questions to ask, questions that have been since developed through our experiences. Today the multitude of choices can be confusing, especially to those who are just beginning to look for library automated systems. While I do not pretend to be an expert on this subject, I do have the experience of automating several libraries, and I believe that there are several basic questions which need answering before you choose a library automation system.

Before you go out looking for computer software, take time to reflect first on your immediate needs and possible future needs. Talk with others who use your library: teachers, students (often they know more than we about what computers can do for us!), administration, librarians in other institutions. Talk with librarians who have automated their libraries. Ask all of these what they would like to see the library computer do for them. Don't, in this initial stage, limit yourself to what you can afford. As long as you are dreaming, dream big! Consider these possible needs:

1. Will you use your computer for circulation, checking materials in and out?
2. Will library users be able to use a computer or computers to look up information?
 3. What information will they access: the "card catalog"? reference materials on CD-ROM? a magazine index? other libraries? the Internet?
 4. How will you start? With a full system? Or will you start small, but plan ahead for adding on? How many computers do you need now? In the future?
 5. Do you plan to enter all library records yourself, use volunteers, buy records on disc, apy someone else to enter your materials, buy software which will enable you to pick up records off a CD-ROM? How will you get student records into your program: from your office database? original entry by you? (Note: the standard for library records is the MARC record; another is the MICROLIF record. Be sure you buy software that will allow you to import MARC or MICROLIF records directly into your catalog. Some companies have less expensive software that will import such records now, but also allow for an add-on product later which will tie into a CD-ROM with a lookup/add-a-record aspect that will save you hours of time.)
6. Will you network your library database into other areas of the library, school, or church?
7. How will you fund this project?

After you have thoughtfully considered these and other questions which come up during your investigation, you are ready to begin to search for the right software to meet your needs. There are now hundreds of library programs, many of which will meet your needs, so spend some time in your local library searching for reviews and articles about library software. Find what each program requires in the way of equipment: memore, RAM, etc. When you have a list of possibilities, call or write for information and sample disks. Read all about each one, try the sample, ask others who have used the program about ease of setup, ease of use, technology support quality from the producer, capability of expansion. Then make a plan, going from what you can afford now to what you would like to have ideally in the future. Pray about it! And submit it to others for advice and approval.

Careful and thoughtful planning now will help you buy something now that will meet your needs fully, now and in the future.

Nancy L. Hesch
In Christ's love,

Our Readers Write

Suggestion:

We would like to see more newly published secular books reviewed from a Christian perspective.

Thanks!

Linda Geary
Christian Academy of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky

I have just received the...Christian Library Journal and have to compliment you! It is even better than the last!...I especially appreciate the Book Nook themes...I have little time to think up reading themes or display ideas...The Book Nook does both.

However, I wanted to ask if it would be possible to include more book reviews for upper grades and young adult or high school for mass market books, especially those from the major "children's publishing houses." Our...budget is very low...it is hard to know (*which books which do not take a laissez faire or permissive view on various values*)...without book reviews.

Peggy Zemens
Library Director
Patton College, Oakland, California

Dear Readers:

These are only two of many requests for reviews of more current titles and more secular titles. We hear you! For a while it seemed that we should let people know what Christian materials were still available, but we have pretty much covered that area, and realize that many of you subscribe to get the Christian point of view on secular materials.

We commit ourselves in the future to sticking with more current titles, and will review more secular materials, especially those for students in grades 6 - 12.

Our future plans also include going to nine issues a year when our paid circulation goes to 2,500. Help us out by sharing your copy of the journal with other librarians. And volunteer to review if you are well versed in some area of literature and like to write.

The Editor

Christian Library

J O U R N A L

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The purpose of the *Christian Library Journal* is to provide readers with reviews of library materials from a Christian point of view. About 250 books, cassette tapes, and videos from both Christian and secular publishers are reviewed each issue. Materials reviewed may reflect a broad range of Christian doctrinal positions and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor of the *Christian Library Journal*.

Nancy Hesch **Publisher
Editor**

Kitty Lindstrom **Design and Layout**

Cover illustration from MINTY, by Alan Schroeder; illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Reprinted by permission of Dial Books for Young Readers. © 1996.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Inside Front Cover

C O L U M N S

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Mary J's Book Nook | Mary Jarvis | 2 |
| Writing With Kids | Georgia Beaverson | 4 |
| Read On, Write On | Penny Lent | 6 |
| Check It Out | Michele Howe | 7 |

A R T I C L E S

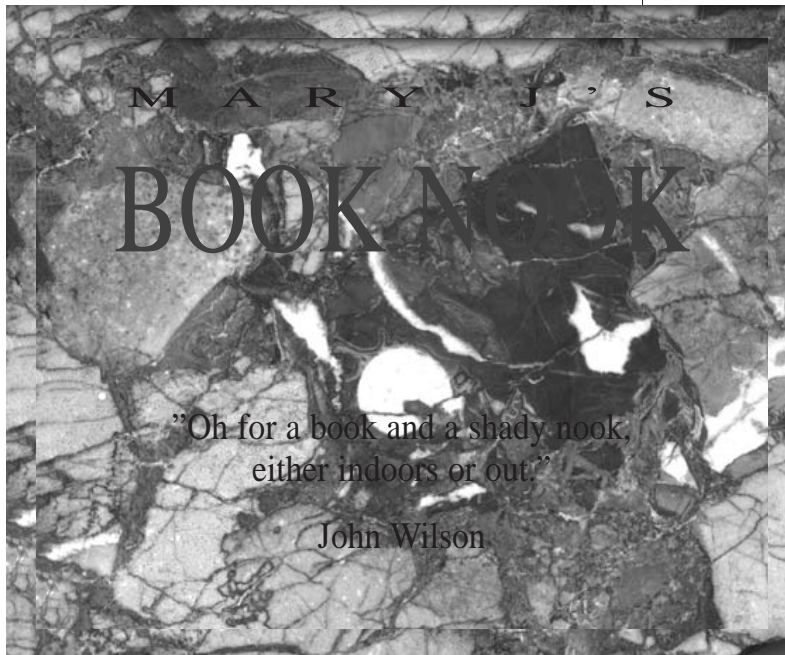
| | | |
|--|--------------------------------|----|
| Living the Story to Give It Life: Peggy King Anderson | Lorinda K. F. Newton | 9 |
| Lindisfarne Legacy: The Writing of David Adam | Andrew Seddon | 11 |
| Reading the Right Stuff | Michele Howe | 36 |

R E V I E W S

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|----|
| Picture Books | | 14 |
| Children's Fiction | | 23 |
| Children's Nonfiction | | 37 |
| Young Adult Fiction | | 49 |
| Adult Fiction | | 58 |
| Nonfiction | | 65 |
| INDEX | | 82 |

I was intrigued recently with the title of a new book.
The Challenging Child by

Dr. Stanley Greenspan brought back memories of certain children I had taught.



We've all had them in our classes, the youngsters who don't march to the same drum that most of the rest of the students do. For some reason or other they seem to be wired up differently. They may overreact to any stimulation, acting out frustrations in the classroom or on the playground. They may create chaos wherever they go or else retreat into a private little world that walls you or anyone else out. You may have applied all your skills and understanding to this child, yet he or she defies any simple solution. You want every pupil in your classroom to achieve at his or her potential, yet it seems impossible to get through to this child, nothing works.

According to Dr. Greenspan, research indicates children come into the world with individual differences in physiological and neurological make-up. Children vary considerably in how they perceive the world around them. Contrary to the belief that all of us experience basic sensations similarly, it has been found that children vary in how they perceive sight, sound, touch, odors, and movement patterns. A child may be overly sensitive and overreactive or undersensitive and underreactive to a given sense.

Is a child who reacts differently to his world because of his physiological make-up doomed to a life of frustration or failure?

"Not so," states Dr. Greenspan, "The significant adults in that child's world can make a difference in how a child lives out his life. Both nature and nurture make a difference."

I can hear you saying, "But I don't have time to figure out and deal with each child's problems!" We are overloaded and stretched beyond our limits so



By Mary Jarvis

much of the time, but if we can learn to evaluate and find some helpful approaches to these challenging children we will simplify our efforts in the classroom and see children learning positively.

Dr. Greenspan's book is directed mainly to parents of challenging children, but his analysis and program for action apply to anyone working with children. He identifies five main types of challenging children and then offers approaches to understanding and dealing with these particular children.

I think his understandings and approaches are something most of us learn with time and experience. His work simply makes the job easier.

Dr. Greenspan advocates patience with these children, but maintains that, "Patience doesn't mean you let a child avoid challenges. It means that you find creative, enjoyable ways to challenge a child to practice what is hard."

I can think of numerous children that needed different approaches to learning because of the ways they reacted. There was first grader Richard who just couldn't shut out the stimulation of the other children. When it came time to work or do seat work he couldn't concentrate and was frequently on his feet checking on the other children. One solution for Richard was to create an office out of a refrigerator box with one side removed and a desk in it. Richard's office sat in a quiet corner and when it came time for him to do his work he would take books and paper to his own special workplace. He was able to complete tasks away from all the other distractions. As the year progressed he needed his "office" less frequently. In the process his confidence grew as he succeeded in his work.

Then there was Sarah who was painfully shy and sensitive. When it came time to read aloud in the reading group she couldn't muster the courage to open her mouth. She would miserably shake her head no. Neither gentle persuasion or firm insistence could budge her from her immobilizing fear.

From observing Sarah and talking with her mother, I knew she could read. Finally I let her go off in a quiet corner with another little girl who read well and they

read to each other. I kept an eye on them and noted when she began to loosen up and interact with her partner as they shared stories together. Then I added another child to the twosome and in a few days Sarah was able to confidently rejoin the larger reading group.

Sixth grader John was dyslexic and had long ago given up on spelling. Chris could never get himself organized. He was a walking disaster, a trail of broken pencils and wadded up paper littered the area around his desk. For both of these boys the typical classroom speller only spelled one more failure.

I paired them together, took away the spelling books and launched them on their own spelling program. Words were presented individually on flash cards with vowels written in red. Families of words with similar structure were introduced so they could recognize similarities. We started out with simple words they could master easily and gradually increased the difficulty. They worked together, drilling each other and affirming one another when they succeeded. They both loved to draw airplanes and were rewarded with opportunities to do so when they achieved. They learned how to recognize their problems and compensate for them.

Dr. Greenspan says that, "If you create pressure and tension around a child's challenges, he may become more unsure of himself. If you inspire a child with enjoyable challenges and a patient approach you may see cooperation and mastery. If you want a child to overcome challenges you need to be supportive, patient and help the child practice, practice, practice."

As we are faced with the challenge of these special children who don't march to everyone else's drum, let us be creative and caring. Remember Thomas Edison and Albert Einstein were challenging children. They didn't fit the mold and had difficulty in the classroom. Each of our students is created uniquely. We can take our place in their lives helping them to someday become the person God designed them to be.

Big Game Hunting

Using Games to Snare Young Writers



by Georgia Beaverson

Sometimes all the coaxing and rewarding in the world doesn't do it. Some kids get so turned off to writing that no assignment—no matter how creative—can lure them into putting words down on paper. So how about a little slight-of-hand to turn drudgery into fun? Make writing a big adventure by making it a game.

Start by making a difficult situation a little easier to bear. Riding in the car can be a torture session for kids and adults alike (does the phrase, "S/he's touching me!" ring a bell?). Parents can head this off by combining the nurture of writing skills with a new family tradition: start playing an oral story-telling game in the car.

To grease the proverbial wheels, the parent should start the ball rolling. Begin with the time-honored phrase, "Once upon a time. . ." That phrase brings magic into your car and cues the kids for what's coming next. Tell a tale that brings its heroes up to a cliff and lets them hang—then turn the story over to the next person in line. He or she resolves that first adventure and starts the protagonists off on another. Then the next person takes over. Repeat this until the trip is over or everyone is exhausted by the creative effort.

Do your children have pets? Try using one or all in the story line. My children's pet rats figured largely into our oral stories. Zipper, Flash, Pudgy, and Nudgy went on many naughty little adventures throughout their two-year lifespan. Together, they escaped their cages and stole Easter candy, went on an involved hunt for each other and discovered the joys of tickling their young

master and mistress as the humans slept. The tales make fond memories even now.

Another fun family writing game is "Fictionary." There are several ways to play. You can break into teams if there are enough players. One team leaves the room while the other chooses an obscure word from the dictionary. Then each person writes a definition for that word, trying to imitate the Webster prose style. Add the real definition (or one of them) to the list and call the other team back into the room. It's their job to figure out which is the real definition.

Fictionary is easy to play as a one-on-one game, too. Once again, the "guesser" leaves the room while the "definer" chooses a word and writes one or more definitions for it, listing them along with the real meaning. The "guesser" attempts to identify the correct definition.

Scrabble has been around for decades, and is a favorite with my children. But the letter tiles can do more than just make words—they can also tell a story. Stretch out on the floor with your child and encourage him to create a sentence out of the tiles. Copy it down on a piece of paper. Then you take a turn, producing a sentence that adds to what your child has already written. Pretty soon you'll have written a tale together. Be sure to keep the story in a safe place for memory's sake. Store it in the game box or in your child's baby book.

If you frequent high-quality children's toy stores, you may have seen the magnetic poetry kit that's become very popular right now. All it consists of is a series of magnetized words which the player rearranges to "write" poetry. Why not create your own set with your child? It's easy to do.

With a pile of old magazines and/or newspapers and a pair of scissors at your side, search for exotic and interesting words from headlines and call-outs (the type size is larger and easier to read). Don't forget to cut out some mundane words like "is" and "the." When you've cut out enough (about fifty or

so), magnetize them by cutting small pieces from strip of magnet tape (available at dime stores and craft shops) and press one piece to the back of each word. Another option is to glue the words to tagboard before you magnetize them. This will lengthen their lives. Use a large metal tray or even your refrigerator to create a "poem for the day" with your child.

It doesn't have to be grammatically perfect (that will probably be impossible, given the word limitations), but it can be beautiful or funny or sad. And it will be *unique*. Another twist on this game is to cut out interesting photos, drawings, and graphics (in the same general size range), magnetize them with the magnet tape, and use them to make a rebus story. This little variation can make the game fun for younger kids to play, too. And it can make for some silly stories!

I first learned of this next game while at a homeschooling conference in Wisconsin. I thought it so charming that I had to include it here. It's similar to the above game in that it involves piles of magazines and lots of cutting. However, instead of searching for words, the game maker must search for graphic designs and unusual little illustrations. With spray-on glue, attach each picture to a piece of tagboard. When the tagboard is full of pictures, laminate it by using a piece of clear contact paper. Then cut out each illustration.

These game "tiles" then go into a box (have your child decorate an inexpensive wooden Shaker box purchased at a craft store). When it's time to play, gather the family 'round and have the first person choose a tile. She must tell a bit of a story based on the picture she chose. Then the next person chooses a tile. He adds to the story, basing his new developments on his tile's picture. Continue on as long or short as you want!

One of the wonderful things about this

game is that it is never the same twice in a row. Not only is it easy to continually add new tiles as you run across interesting graphics, but it's also easy to "correct" the game by adding needed tiles. And the game is simple to tailor to a family's interests (eg, sports, animals, fairy tales, dinosaurs, etc.).

For most children, the sense of being an important and supported part of a family team gives them the extra "oomph" they need to succeed in anything. These games provide that impetus. But they also provide something extra--hands-on experience in a non-threatening atmosphere.

Telling stories in the car provides children with a link to a tradition as old as man. Using Scrabble tiles to write sentences not only incorporates spelling skills, but it also gives children a tactile experience with an inherently inner activity. For many children, that physical doing greatly aids the learning process. Fictionary helps kids gain familiarity with the dictionary. The magnetic poetry game helps ease young poets and writers into the parts of language, fitting them together to form a particular meaning. And the picture tile activity is a truly creative game that really does teach storytelling skills while drawing a family together.

Writing doesn't have to be a tense activity lived out with a pencil and eraser or in front of a keyboard. By using games, writing can actually become fun!

*Next time:
Beyond the Theme*

Commercial Games That Promote Writing Skills

The following is a partial list of the many commercially available games, crafts and software that improve or promote writing skills for eager young players.

Games and Crafts:

1. Scrabble or Scrabble Junior (S & R Games)
2. Boggle or Boggle Junior
3. Magnetic Poetry Kit or Magnetic Poetry For Kids
4. Fun With Hieroglyphics (The Metropolitan Museum of Art)
5. Stamp A-Story Kits
6. Wordsters
7. Creative Storytelling (Creativity for Kids)
8. Mad Labs by Roger Price and Leonard Stern
9. The Imagine Book Kit
10. Young Storyteller; Young Reporters (Patail)
11. Rubber Stamp Adventures: God 's World; Noah 's World
12. Kids ' Magnepoems: Nature; Love; Ocean Life; Expressions
13. Read All About Me; Days in My Life; My Picture Story Pad (Alex)
14. Pages and Pockets; Girl of Today Doll and Books (Pleasant Company)
15. Blurt (Webster)
16. UpWords(MiltonBradley)
17. The Children's Travel Journal by Ann Banks (Little Book Room)
18. Little Bear Book by Heidi Thompson (Orca Publications)
19. Make Believe (Klutz Press)

Software:

1. The Amazing Writing Machine (Broderbund)
2. Bailey 's Book House (Edmark)
3. Imagination Express: Destination Castle; Destination Neighborhood; Destination Rain Forest (Edmark)
4. Myst (Broderbund)
5. Read, Write and Type! (Learning Company)
6. Storybook Weaver (MECC)
7. Magic Theatre (Knowledge Adventure)

PRIMARY STUDENTS GET PUBLISHED

Spring Tides magazine is published each spring, containing exclusively work from students ages five to twelve. They want first rights, no reprints. Fiction to 1,200 words can be adventure, ethnic, family, fantasy, history, humor, animals, mystery, nature, science fiction. Nonfiction, also to 1,200 words, can cover nature, personal experience, animals and humor. They use 35 fiction and 35 nonfiction pieces each issue. All styles of poetry are accepted, to 20 lines, any number sent at once. Illustrations that accompany a story or poem are also welcome. No simultaneous submissions. Pay is a byline, publication, and one contributor s copy. Editor s tips: Materials should be carefully proof read and typed. Each piece must be labeled with name, grade, school, birth date, home and school address. Include a signed statement from a parent or teacher verifying that the writing is original and by the student. SASE for free guidelines. A sample copy \$5 with a SASE and four stamps. Submit to Editor Connie Houston, 824 Stillwood Drive, Savannah, GA 31419-2643.

Read On, Write On, Get Published

TEENS GET PUBLISHED

Lighthouse is a 56 page literary magazine for all ages. Publication is quarterly. Fiction to 1,500 words on any topic including sci-fi, drama, romance and problem solving. Pays up to \$50. Poetry on any topic can be up to 50 lines; pay s \$5. Sample copies are \$3. Editor s tips: Your writing needs to be acceptable to the whole family. We want only wholesome values. If you use a moral, blend it into the plot and action skillfully. Send original adventure,

romance, mystery and humor, or any blend. Editor Tim Clinton, P.O. Box 1377, Auburn, WA 98071-1377. STUDENT CONTESTS

Negative Capability Contest for all ages results in publication in a journal. Postmark deadline is January 15. First rights required. Responds in four weeks. Send two copies of typed project with cover letter and brief biography. SASE for free guidelines and theme list. Fiction or nonfiction of 1,500-5,000 words is accepted on theme. All styles and lengths of poetry OK; shorter is better. Also accepts 5 x8 B/W photos, and art to 8 x11 , though not contests. Prizes: Publication, one contributor s copy; Fiction and Poetry, \$1,000 each; occasional nonfiction prizes. Tips: Send your best work. Art and photos returned with SASE. Writing not returned. SASE for winners list. Entry fee is \$10 per story, \$3 per poem. No critique. Send to Editor Sue Walker, 62 Ridgelawn Dr. E., Mobile, AL 36608.

WRITER S WORDS TO KNOW

First rights—*The first place the work is ever published..*

Simultaneous submissions—*Sending identical projects to more than one editor.*

Byline—*Having the author s name next to the work, i.e. by Susie Smith..*

Contributor s copy—*Free copies in which the author s work is published.*

Proof read—*To read through work and edit for best quality, numerous times.*



by Penny Lent

Penny Lent lives in Puyallup, Washington, with her husband, two sons, two orange cats, and assorted northwest slugs. Lent is a frequent conference and school speaker and has freelanced over six hundred articles for radio, magazines, and her newspaper columns. She is editor and designer of two national newsletters and has authored seven books, including Young Writer's Market Manual, Young Writer's Contest Manual and Young Writer's Manuscript Manual from Kaleidoscope Press.

Check It Out Homeschoolers Using Their Public Library



by Michele Howe

This issue our emphasis will be on general and specific pet care topics. Key words to cue in: (animals, animal care, pets, pet care, veterinarian, zoology). Among the various areas of study available under "animal care" include; animal classification, zoology, animal behavior, environmental/habitat studies, and camouflage animals. Under the heading "pets" find: pet adoption, pet-sitting, breeding, animal language, and medical conditions/first aid. Other miscellaneous but interesting subtopics are: pet cookbooks, pet jokes/riddles, pet exercise, pet fiction, and pet games.

Listed below are some of the best overall guides to pet care.

* *Zoo Animals: A Smithsonian Guide* by Michael H. Robinson and David Challinor. Macmillan, USA, 1995. The table of contents is composed of colorful pictures of zoo animals from around the United States. Peruse through each section full of vibrant action photos complete with all the vital statistics and unusual habits and behaviors.

* *The Complete Book of Pet Care* by Dr. Peter Roach. Howell Book House, New York, 1995. This is a guide to care for birds, cats, dogs, fish, guinea pigs, hamsters, horses, mice, rabbits, reptiles and amphibians. As the title suggests, this book is complete in its detailed coverage of animal care and treatment. Included are many "how it really happens" photos to further illustrate a specific technique or training procedure.

* *How To Make A Miniature Zoo* by Vinson Brown. Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1956. This book is an oldie but a real gem. If you can find it, you'll be able to construct your own mini-zoo at home. Chapter titles are: Planning Your Miniature Zoo, Insects, Spiders and Their Relatives, Aquarium Making, Amphibians and Reptiles, Mammals, Birds, and Some Tasks and Goals of Zoo Keeping. This book makes interesting reading even if you do not choose to make your own zoo!

The Resource Section.

* *The Merck Veterinary Manual*. This hefty volume contains everything you want to know about a variety of animals. A professional reference book containing complete information on: entire functioning of animal physical bodies, behavior, clinical procedures, lab and zoo animals, management, husbandry, and nutrition, pharmacology, poultry, toxicology, and much more!

Try This.

* Periodicals (magazines). Our library system uses InfoTrac EF for its periodicals search. When beginning a word search for pet care in general, first type in the title of your subject guide (example: Pets). Second, cue in your key word(s) and a search will begin for any compatible articles under the heading you have provided. You can use one word, several, or even phrases from titles to help narrow your listing of articles (example: pets, zoo). Once the computer has completed its search, it will provide you with a list from which to choose. As you scan for articles you are interested in, take note that your source (periodical name, issue, year, page number) will be listed along with the title of the article, author's name, abstract (a short review of the article's content) and subjects (additional topics to check under for further study). You can also choose to narrow your search by specifying certain conditions relevant to your study or explore by requesting articles listed under subdivisions and related subjects. This is a wonderful and comprehensive way to initiate

resource building skills in children (and adults).

Fun Stuff.

* *Animal Family Calendar*. A coloring book where kids color in pictures of animals with their babies. Lets your child develop art skills and familiarity with the calendar. Hewitt Moore Foundation.

* *Kid's Animal Exercise Fun*. Teaches children breathing, stretching, aerobic, balance and more! Even studies real animal behaviors and movements. Stresses good health habits and coordination. Hewitt Moore Foundation.

Local organizations which offer demonstrations on pet care and safety include: Human Societies, Animal Protection Agencies, Animal Control, and 4-H chapters. Don't forget to contact nearby zoos and petting/working farms for classes and apprenticeships. Some veterinarians also offer tours and some permit limited visits during minor animal surgeries. Our city has a Pet Library where a professional animal handler comes to a homeschooling group/class and demonstrates (with the pet of your choice) how to care for and train specific animals.

Tips To Take With You.

* Circulating Encyclopedias. All library systems have resource materials that cannot be removed from the premises and you must use these while at the library. However, many systems now have encyclopedias which can be checked and borrowed from the library.

* Ask your librarian for the easy reading section (grade levels of 1 -3) of the library for younger children whose reading skills are not yet ready for the general titles found throughout much of the library shelves. In this section, both fiction and non-fiction is available so the easy-reader can find biographical, historical, scientific, and general interest books to use as reference in report writing.

* Take time to look for *The Internet Kids Yellow Pages* written by Jean Armour Polly and published by Osborne Series. This book is chock full of interesting (and safe) websites for kids to look up. Virtually every topic imaginable is listed in this handy reference volume.

Michele Howe is a freelance writer living in LaSalle, Michigan with her husband Jim (a public high school instructor) and their four homeschooled children.

Tips To Take With You

* Inquire into the Internet accessibility in your library system. Many systems are making available an 800 number which allows you to check into the resources currently in your library system without leaving home.

* If your library is using the Dewey Decimal System, the first number on the binding of the call number will usually be grouped with similar books of its kind. Once you locate a particular call number, you can select from a larger grouping of books than you knew was available.

* Check to see if your library has an encyclopedia in CD-Rom such as Microsoft Encarta. This is yet another good way to locate information pertinent to your home state in bite sized chunks.

Living the Story to Give It Life

Profile of

Peggy King Anderson

by Lorinda K. F. Newton

*Lorinda K. F. Newton is a
freelance writer, editor,
and desktop publisher who
lives with her husband in
Kirkland, Washington.
She is editor and designer
of the Northwest Christian
Author and Life Line
newsletters.*

The lights flip off.

“We’re going to initiate the time travel. Everyone close your eyes,” announces Peggy King Anderson. “Time travel beginning.” She whacks the front desk, making a few of the first graders jump.

“Arrival,” says Anderson as she turns the lights back on. The children open their eyes.

“Quick what did you experience in time travel?”

The hands pop up.

“I felt really dizzy.”

“I felt like I was floating.”

“Quickly, log in what you felt,” instructs Anderson. “Write down one thing you felt during time travel.”

Peggy King Anderson, a children’s author, conference speaker, and writing-workshop teacher, believes that to write a story, one must first experience it. Life infuses her fiction because Anderson connects with her characters on emotional and physical levels. Her enthusiasm for writing spills over into her teaching as she shows students how to use this technique through imaginary and sensory exploration.

Anderson now loves to share the excitement of writing. Yet, as a child she held no aspirations to be a writer. Though she won first place in an essay contest in the eighth grade and had a teacher write on top of a paper, “A+, you are a writer,” her interest wasn’t sparked. Instead, she pursued a degree in medical technology and worked in that field through her first year of marriage. Then her five children and various community activities in Tucson, Arizona, filled her time.

However, after the death of her three-day-old baby, a counseling session changed her life’s direction. At the same time, her husband received a job offer from Boeing in Seattle.

Knowing that the move would take Anderson away from family and her numerous community activities, the counselor asked, “What are you going to do when you move?”

Anderson answered, “I’m going to write.”

“He looked at me, and I was as astounded as he was. I’m

still surprised I said it, but it must have been incubating there all those years.”

Following her counselor’s suggestion, Anderson made a three-year plan for her writing. The first year, she just wrote letters to relatives. The second year, she wrote for the Catholic school’s newsletter. Then on January 1, 1981, she sat down at her typewriter in the laundry room and wrote her first story, a children’s story, “The Vegetable-Soup Pumpkin.”

This piece didn’t sell right away, but later that year she sold a Christmas story to Pockets magazine, for which she now writes a regular feature. Today, Anderson’s articles have appeared in several children’s magazines, such as Highlights for Children and Brio, and she has published four books (see sidebar). She has won three writing awards, including the Magazine Merit Fiction Award from the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators, and she has taught creative writing at Lake Washington Technical College in Kirkland, Washington, for over ten years.

Writing for children

When asked why she writes for children, Anderson exclaimed with delight, “Because I love children’s books.” Her love of reading also drives her passion for writing:

I thought that is one of the best gifts you could give kids. If you can get kids to love reading, it opens up any door in the world for them. They can learn anything. They can do anything. So I wanted to be part of that. I wanted to write things that kids would love to read.

Whether writing for the Christian or secular market, at whatever level she can, Anderson seeks to communicate that God loves each child, and that each is special, unique, wonderful, and has gifts.

In addition, Anderson feels it is important to help her readers better understand their emotions. She accomplishes this by allowing her characters to wrestle with particular issues throughout a story.

For example, in *The Fall of the Red Star*, Anderson focused on Stephen’s struggle between the ideal and reality of the Hungarian revolution:

He wants to fight for freedom and that chance to have his father, who may or may not be alive, come back. And yet, when he is in the position in which he really has to fight and to actually kill, Stephen experiences an incredible conflict. He looks at his hands that could draw music out

of a piano, music that could make people laugh and cry, and move them to the depths of their spirits. And with those same hands he had killed a man.

Anderson connects with her characters on a deep, emotional level by “living with them.”

“All day, as I’m confronting things, I try to imagine what my character would be doing,” she explained. For instance, when Anderson goes to bed, she asks herself, “What is Ellie doing now?” (Ellie is the main character of the book she is currently working on, *Spring Forward, Ellie*.) “Is she trying to finish her last-minute homework? Is she lying awake worrying about something?”

Teaching children to write

Anderson has so much fun writing that she loves to share this joy with others, particularly with children.

“I get so excited to see kids turn on to writing!” she exclaimed. “When I go into the classroom, my goal is to see the kids get turned on, to experience the excitement of writing.” And getting them excited she does.

Anderson teaches writing through prewriting, a process through which she covers setting, character, plot, and other writing elements one piece at a time. One of the scenarios she uses is the Drell mystery.

While the students are out of the room, Anderson arrives to set up her props. When the children return, she says, “Today we’re going to solve a mystery together. And we get to write the story.” Then she asks if they see any mysterious clues in the room. The students the sombrero she has brought in. “Oh, there’s a hat! There’s a hat!”

She has one of the students examine the hat. Underneath the hat is an old, battered tin can with a note inside: “Help! Drell is missing. Meet me at Crystal Rock.”

“What do you think Crystal Rock is?” asks Anderson. “Where is it?” The kids start brainstorming, and Anderson jots their ideas down on an overhead. Then she stops and says, “Really fast, you write down what you think it is and where it is.” At this point, the students describe their settings without realizing they are creating them.

Next, she asks, “Who is Drell? And who’s going to meet you at Crystal Rock when you go there?” So the brainstorming continues, and the children develop their characters. “Okay, real fast now, write out who Drell is going to be in your story.”

By prewriting a few pieces at a time after brainstorming sessions, the students get caught up in the story and focus less on the fact that they are writing.

“Kids get hung up on the self-consciousness of trying to put words down,” said Anderson. “So, I don’t focus on the words, but on that reality they’re trying to convey.”

To help the children develop more vivid stories, Anderson asks questions using the five senses. “To get kids to write,” she explained, “you really need to focus on the sensory.” Anderson encourages parents and teachers to “give children an experience. Help them notice the senses. Help them zero in with the specific, so they will look at a really small detail.” She gave the example of having a child look at the backyard through a toiletpaper roll and asking what he really sees in that narrow view.

Sensory experiences with the family can happen at the zoo, walking down the street, at a bug exhibit at the Pacific Science Center in Seattle, or even while making a batch of peanut-butter cookies.

“Whatever you do,” said Anderson, “help your children perceive sensory detail. Notice how flour looks fluffy in the bowl. How the spoon clangs against the bowl. How peanut butter tastes and smells and how the stickiness feels. Then encourage them to record this experience.”

Relying on real and imaginary experiences, Peggy King Anderson creates stories that come alive in the reader’s mind, and with enthusiasm and encouragement, she teaches others to do the same. ■■■■■

Children’s Books by Peggy King Anderson

First-Day Blues. (Decision is Yours Series). ISBN 0943990726. Parenting Press, 1992. Paperbound, \$5.95. Gr. 3 - 6.

It’s the first day at a new school for Megan. Throughout the book, she is confronted with choices about making friends, whether to step forward and befriend someone or to be shy. The child reading the book gets to make the choices for Megan and determine whether she has a happy or sad day.

Safe at Home! ISBN 0689316860. Atheneum Press, 1992. Hardbound, \$13.95. ISBN 0689718330. Aladdin Paperbacks, 1995. Paperbound, \$3.95. Gr. 3 - 7.

Sixth-grader Tony struggles with the need to care for his 4-year-old sister, the confusion about his mother’s strange sickness, his anger towards his father for deserting them, and his yearning to just be a kid and play baseball. At the end of the book, Tony learns to forgive his father, who returns, and to accept his mother’s alcoholism.

Many teachers have read this book and Anderson’s out-of-print book, *Coming Home*, aloud in their classrooms.

The Fall of the Red Star. Co-authored with Helen M. Szablya. ISBN 1563974193. Boyds Mill Press, 1996. Hardbound, \$15.95. Gr. 6 - 12.

This historical novel describes the 1956 Hungarian revolt against the Soviets through the eyes of a 14-year-old boy. In the beginning, Stephen joins the freedom fighters, but when the Soviets return to squelch the revolution, his family escapes to Austria through a swamp. This story is based on the Szablya family’s personal experience. Some violent scenes depicted in this book may be inappropriate for young children.

Teachers of fourth through sixth graders read aloud this book to help their students understand, not only this historical event, but current events such as the strife in Bosnia as well.

A Horse’s Tale: Ten Adventures in One Hundred Years. Edited by Nancy Luen. Illustrated by Connie J. Pope. ISBN 0943990505. Parenting Press, 1989. Paperbound, \$7.95. Gr. 2 - 6.

In commemoration of Washington State’s centennial in 1989, ten authors wrote this collection of stories. Each chapter focuses on one decade in history and tells a tale about a child’s life during that time. The children come from all racial backgrounds, and through their adventures, the readers learn about state history. Tying each chapter together is a small, wooden horse. This horse is either lost or given away by one child and found or received by the child in the next chapter. Anderson wrote the last chapter of the book.

This book is often used by the Washington State public schools to help teach Washington State history.

Workshops by Peggy King Anderson

Peggy King Anderson is available to teach creative-writing workshops in schools, libraries, and community centers. For more information, call (206) 823-6149 or write, Peggy King Anderson, 8620 NE 133rd Pl., Kirkland, WA 98034.

LINDISFARNE LEGACY

The Writing of David Adam

by

Andrew M. Seddon

*I weave a silence onto my lips
I weave a silence into my mind
I weave a silence within my heart
I close my ears to distractions
I close my eyes to attractions
I close my heart to temptations*

*Calm me O Lord as you stilled the storm
Still me O Lord, keep me from harm
Let all the tumult within me cease
Enfold me Lord in your peace .*

David Adam¹

For over a millennium, ever since A.D. 634 when St. Aidan established his mission during the depths of the Dark Ages, Lindisfarne—Holy Island—has been a place of pilgrimage. Spiritual seekers from many lands have dared the dangerous tidal flats to reach this tiny island off Britain's Northumberland coast. Lindisfarne's long history is a chronicle of the defense of Christian faith against intractable pagan assault.

According to the Venerable Bede, Aidan cultivated peace and love, purity, and humility; was above anger and greed; despised pride and conceit; kept and taught the laws of God; and was diligent in study and prayer. He used his priestly authority to restrain the proud and the powerful. He comforted the sick and aided the poor.

I visited Lindisfarne on a June day when the tourists had retreated to the mainland and the tiny village lay calm and peaceful. The priory that flourished for nearly five hundred years lies in ruins, but the rubble still bears testimony to the effectiveness of Aidan's labors, and those of his successor, Cuthbert.

On Holy Island the spirit of those saintly monks seems to linger, as if the very contours of the island are endued with their gentleness. And worship continues on Lindisfarne.

I hurried through the ruins to the 12th century parish church of St. Mary, where the vicar, David Adam, conducted evensong.

My first encounter with Celtic Christianity had occurred a year earlier when I read Adam's book *The Cry of the Deer*, meditations on the *Hymn of St. Patrick*. In *The Cry Of The Deer* I discovered an approach to Christianity different from that of much contemporary worship.

The Celtic Christians approached their faith in a reverent, prayerful, relevant, quiet, and gentle manner. The Celtic Christians—saints like Aidan and Cuthbert—acknowledged God's transcendence, but infused that recognition with an almost overwhelming sense of the Incarnation, the Presence of God with us.

"Lord, deliver us from sour-faced saints," pleaded St. Teresa. Though simple and austere, the Celtic saints discovered joy.

A Northumbrian himself, Adam spoke with the spirit of those departed saints. The atmosphere in St. Mary's reminded me of when I stood at the tomb of St. Cuthbert in Durham Cathedral and listened to the prayers of a group of Dutch pilgrims.

"Not long ago," Adam wrote in *The Cry of the Deer*, "I was in a little gray chapel in a valley. The preacher was rather tedious and the hymns dull. I could have endured both, but when he started his prayers by saying, 'Now I want you to imagine God is present,' I could have wept. I now knew why it was such heavy going: he did not know of the Presence, he could only imagine it. God is beyond our greatest imagination; either He is present, and that influences everything we do, or He is absent, and then we are poor indeed."²

The Presence of God is one theme that runs through Adam's writings. He also shares the Celt's love for the earth. "One of the saddest impressions that some Christians give," he writes, "is that they do not love this beautiful world. Let us show beyond doubt that we believe this is God's world, we believe in a Creator, and that every part of this world ought to show that it belongs to him. It is in this world that He has chosen to create us; we are here to live to His glory."³

The current revival of interest in Celtic Christianity—a revival that

cuts across denominational boundaries—can be traced to a handful of people, including David Adam. Adam has labored to keep alive the vision and the legacy of the Celtic saints of Holy Island, allowing their voices to speak to the 20th century. Beginning with his first book, *The Edge of Glory—Prayers in the Celtic Tradition*, published in 1985, he has sought to recapture the Celtic manner of prayer.

Adam's desire, he writes, is to "walk the edge of glory and see for oneself the ever abiding presence, that never leaves us or forsakes us: the encompassing God, the watchful eye, the strong helping hand, the power of the Spirit. Only then can we go out in mission, for then we go not in our own strength and ideas, but in the power and love of the God who abides."⁴

The prayers in *The Edge of Glory* grew out of Adam's parish work, where they were regularly used in parish worship. To Adam, prayer is an essential of the Christian life. "If prayer has become boring, or you have ceased to pray, there is nothing wrong with prayer—and the Almighty cannot be boring. There is something wrong with the way you are doing it. Too much of prayer has lost its rhythm... Prayer that has lost its simplicity of relationship with God is too contrived... above all things, seek him. If there is to be any real glory in your life, remember it is his and from him."⁵

*Thanks be to thee, for the gifts thou givest me,
Each day, each night, on land and sea
Each weather, fair, wild or calm
For thine eye to keep from harm
For each hour, its ebb, its flow,
For thine arm around me so
For each gift thanks be to thee
The best gift is thyself to me.⁶*

Adam's subsequent books—*Tides and Season, Power Lines, The Open Gate*, and most recently *The Rhythm of Life*, continue his explorations into the simple, direct, nature of Celtic Christian prayer. Besides *The Cry of The Deer* he has written another meditation, *The Eye of the Eagle*, on the familiar hymn "Be Thou My Vision." *Fire of the North* tells the story of Adam's favorite saint, Cuthbert, who for him embraces much of the Celtic vision and attitude towards life.

*I bow before the Father
Who made me
I bow before the Son
Who saved me
I bow before the spirit
Who guides me
In love and adoration
I give my lips
I give my heart
I give my mind
I give my strength
I bow and adore thee
Sacred Three
The Ever One
The Trinity⁷*

*

I spoke with David Adam on the steps of the rectory, and later he took time to answer questions about the role of Celtic spirituality in the modern world.

He finds the relevance of Celtic Christian spirituality for today in the Celtic relationship with and care of Creation, and in the deep awareness of mystery and Presence.

"We have the very things the world lacks," he says. "We add to this a deep joy rather than the gravity of much of the church. The Celtic Church learned to laugh because of the Presence."⁸

What makes Celtic spirituality unique? And what are the most essential aspects of Celtic spirituality?

"Celtic spirituality is not so much unique—unless you mean in emphasis. Its emphasis is on the God who comes, who comes down and comes in. It is a thoroughly incarnational faith. The immanence of God is the great message—and his love for the world. It is a good world and belongs to God and we need to share in its Creation and Redemption."

I wondered if the current interest in the Celtic Church was a passing fancy or if it had potential to be an agent of renewal in the Church.

"Let's hope that it is not a passing fancy," he replied, because it deals with the deep relationships and realities of life—if it is lost, the world will be much poorer—and less safe! It is for such reasons there is a growing interest in the Celtic Church, in Wales, Scotland, N.E. England, and Ireland in particular."

Continued on p.63.

Christian Library

J O U R N A L

B O O K R E V I E W S

| | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Picture Books | 14 |
| Children's Fiction | 23 |
| Children's Nonfiction | 37 |
| Young Adult Fiction | 49 |
| Fiction | 58 |
| Nonfiction | 65 |

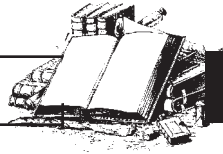
R A T I N G S Y S T E M

Quality of Material

- 5 Excellent - among the very best of this type
- 4 Good - well written; strong recommendation
- 3 Average - readers will enjoy
- 2 Fair - can recommend, but not as well written
- 1 Poor - cannot recommend

Acceptability of Material

- 5 No questionable elements
- 4 Slight concerns
- 3 Moderate concerns
- 2 Barely acceptable
- 1 Too questionable to recommend



Allan-Meyer, Kathleen. *I Have a New Friend.* Photographs by Mike Spinelli. Barron's, 1995. ISBN 0812065328. Hardbound, \$10.95. Order direct, 1-800-645-3476. K - Gr. 2.

I Have a New Friend explores the cultural differences between two kindergarten girls who meet at school. Lisa writes a letter to her grandmother about her new Japanese friend Saki and about the development of their relationship. Lisa tells about introducing Saki to American customs and culture such as peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, spaghetti and meatballs, Halloween, and Valentine's Day. Saki teaches Lisa about chopsticks, teriyaki, kimonos, and Hina Matsuri, a Japanese celebration that means Girls' Day. The book has a glossary of terms and a full explanation of Hina Matsuri and how it is observed.

The black and white photos are of the two girls visiting each others' homes, at school, and at play. The photos are a delightful mix of posed and candid shots that capture their charm.

The book is written to celebrate the differences between people and cultures and how understanding those differences and finding similarities helps us all to get along. This purpose is achieved in a well written, nicely paced, even-handed manner.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Sally Kuhns
Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

Baxter, Leon. *The Christmas Story.* (Let's Play). Lion Publishing, 1995. ISBN 0745931936. Hardbound, \$3.99. PS - K.

The Christmas Story is the story of Jesus' birthday told complete in simple words. First the angel comes to Mary telling her that she will have God's son. Then Mary and Joseph go to Bethlehem and find no room in the inn. Baby Jesus is born and placed in a manger while an angel announces the news to the shepherds. Far away wise men see the star and came to see baby Jesus.

What child doesn't like to play make believe or imitate grown ups? The Let's Play Series in hardback gives guidelines for acting out well known Bible stories. At the end of each short book are ideas for acting out the story. Not only will children have fun using their imagination, but they also will be learning the basic Bible

stories in a way they will never forget. The Let's Play Series is practical in its approach of what can be used for props, encouraging the use of materials found in any home. These series are ideal for Sunday school teachers, homeschool mom's, and those working with children. Parents can also use this series for a family night together.

Other titles in the Let's Play series:

- In the Beginning
- David and Goliath
- Noah's Ark

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Dorcas Walker
Freelance Writer
Jamestown, Tennessee

Beers, V. Gilbert. *The Toddlers Bible Christmas Book.* Illustrated by Carol Boerke. Victor Books, 1995. ISBN 156476527X. Hardbound, \$5.99. 18 months - PS.

As a retelling of the Christmas story, *The Toddlers Bible Christmas Book* introduces preschoolers to the familiar story of Jesus' birth. Divided into five chapters, the picture book covers the annunciation, the birth of Christ, visits from the shepherds and wise men, and the flight into Egypt. The language is simple, using questions to draw toddlers into the story. The book also offers a chapter called "Tips for Parents" which gives parents additional ideas to expand on the story, including Bible references, questions, and activities.

The book does not stand out as particularly creative, instructive, or well-written—but neither is it badly written, lazy, or empty. Its value lies in the ability of the parent to expand on the themes and subjects on which Christmas Book touches.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Georgia Beaverson
Freelance Writer
Madison, Wisconsin

Beers, V. Gilbert. *The Toddlers Bible Easter Book.* Illustrated by Carol Boerke. Victor Books, 1996. ISBN 1564765261. Hardbound, \$5.99. 18 months - PS.

Best-selling children's author V. Gilbert Beers writes a special group of six stories to introduce little ones to the events of Easter. Starting with Palm Sunday, the book takes the events of Holy Week and explains them simply for children to understand. Carole Boerke illustrates the stories in simple, vivid color.

This is an excellent introduction for children to become familiar with the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus. It does presuppose that a child has background and training in the Christian gospel. Some vocabulary such as the words "sin" and "Savior" need to already be understood or explained in the reading as the book assumes an understanding of such words. The book is faithful in portraying the events of Easter, but lacks interpretation and could be confusing to a child without the necessary background in faith and Christian education. It deals with concepts that are not easy for adults to understand and leaves a lot of gaps that might be pretty bewildering for a young child.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Mary Jarvis
Freelance Writer
Marysville, Washington

Birch, Barbara. *Katie and Jake and the Birthday Circus.* Illustrated by Taia Morley. Augsburg, 1995. ISBN 0806628170. Paperbound, \$4.99. Gr. 1 - 2.

A long box arrives in the mail for Katie and Jake from their grandparents. The contents, a pair of stilts for Katie and a lasso for Jake, lead the children into a summer full of learning how to use these unusual gifts. Young readers will laugh when Jake lassoes the water faucet, resulting in a flooded bathroom, and Katie solves the dripping water problem with bubble gum and her stilts! Broken into four short chapters, Barbara Birch has written a tale of adventure and misadventure in which the children eventually put their newly learned skills to work entertaining Miss Emma, the elderly neighbor, with her own birthday circus party.

Written as a book for early readers with a reading vocabulary of 300 words, Taia Morley's lively

watercolor illustrations fill in what the simplified text leaves out.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

Birch, Barbara and Beverly Lewis. *Katie and Jake and the Haircut Mistake*. Illustrated by Taia Morley. Augsburg, 1995. ISBN 0806628162. Paperbound, \$4.99. K - Gr. 2.

Katie and Jake and the Haircut Mistake is an excellent book for helping young children gain proficiency in reading. The book uses large print, contains fewer than 300 different words, and the vocabulary is at first to second grade reading level. Sentences are kept short in an easy-to-read format.

The thirty-one page book contains one story broken up into short chapter segments. Katie and Jake learn that their Aunt Sarah is coming for a visit. They decide to make everything clean and shiny for her visit but end up with dust in Katie's hair and dirt on Jake's hands. Their efforts to "fix" their mistakes lead them to more problems.

This is an enjoyable book containing both black and white and color illustrations. The pictures are charming in themselves and an asset to the story.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Donna Brown
Church Librarian
Portland, Oregon

Bogart, Jo Ellen. *Gifts*. Illustrated by Barbara Reid. Scholastic, 1995. ISBN 0590552600. Hardbound, \$15.95. PS - Gr. 2.

My grandma is taking a trip around the world. As she prepares to go each time she says, "What would you have me bring?" The answer: "not much," becomes a baobab seed from Africa, a boomerang from Australia, a sunrise from Mexico, a rainbow from Hawaii, an iceberg from the Arctic, some curry and rice from India, a mountain from Switzerland, something small from the Great Wall of China, and the smell of rain from England.

Jo Ellen Bogart's *Gifts* are enticingly portrayed by the colorful plasticine illustrations on every page of the book. Many facts are indirectly

learned about each place while focusing on the gift that will be received.

Children will want to read this book themselves. However, it becomes a special treasure when shared with your grandmother.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Marie Knaupp
Retired Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

Boland, Janice. *A Dog Named Sam*. Illustrated by G. Brian Karas. Dial Books for Young Readers, 1996. ISBN 0803715307. Hardbound, \$12.99. K - Gr. 2.

This delightful book for beginning readers is made up of three short stories. Sam, a plain looking brown dog, has a charming personality and loves to be in the thick of things. In the first story Sam shows how well-trained he is at fetching. He fetched everything that could fit in his mouth. When Molly and Noah went to school, Sam got bored and brought a pile of newspapers to the door, and then he fetched the neighbor's clothesline. Complete with laundry.

In the second story we learn that Sam is a web-footed dog who loves water. Everywhere Sam finds water, he jumps in for a quick swim—much to the chagrin of the fishermen, the people on the beach, the policeman at the fountain in the park. But the kids love it when Sam jumps in the pool with them.

Sam does not do well by himself at night. When everyone goes to bed in the third story, Sam is left alone downstairs. He has soon played with all of his toys. He sings, he barks, he scratches, and he growls, leaving the family with no alternative except to get up very early. And what did Sam do? It had been a long night and he was tired.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Helen Hunter
Author/Freelance Writer
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Brown, Margaret Wise. *Animals in the Snow*. Illustrated by Carol Schwartz. Hyperion Books for Children, 1995. ISBN 0786800399. Hardbound, \$14.95. PS - Gr. 2.

Five little animals—a squirrel, a bird, a bunny, a cat, and a dog—shiver in the cold as snow begins to fall. They scamper to shelter in their snow-covered homes. Warm sunshine beckons the animals out again to play in the snow with a boy and a girl.

Young readers will watch with great interest as the children create snow images of the five animals, transforming Carol Schwartz's beautiful furry illustrations from earlier pages into small white statues.

Readers will listen intently to the author's gentle, repetitive phrasing as the snowy world melts into puddles and the real animals run with the children into the woods to play their respective games. Surprise! They all find a snowdrop flower, the first sign of spring. A poem-song about spring (without musical notation) appears on the last page.

Because the book incorporates limited vocabulary and much repetition, a primary reader will also enjoy reading the story alone. In addition to building concepts of cold, snow, animal identities, kinds of play, weather and seasonal changes, and the snowdrop flower, the book charms children with the wonder of snow and a subtle suggestion to do more than just build a snowman.

Another outstanding book from Margaret Wise Brown, *Animals in the Snow* is melodious entertainment, as soft as a lullaby.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Rhonda Marie Lackey
Freelance Writer, Retired Teacher/Librarian
Tukwila, Washington

Carlyle, Linda Porter. *Red and Purple on My Feet*. Illustrated by Kim Justinen. (A Child's Steps to Jesus; 10). Pacific Press Publishing Assn, 1994. ISBN 081631182X. Hardbound, \$6.95. PS - Gr. 2.

Narrated by the bouncy colorful unnamed main character, the subject of good and bad choices is explored in this tenth book of the Child's Steps to Jesus series. A little girl is faced with making choices in what she will wear, what she will eat for breakfast, and who she will play with. When she has to decide whether to take her best friend's new red rubber ball, she learns that some choices are harder than others and that some choices are more important than others. She finally decides that she can choose to be good even if it is difficult and that praying about her choices can make them easier.

The only weak area of this story is that in the beginning the child's father chooses to drive too fast, receives a ticket, and must face paying a fine. When our young star asks what a fine is the subject is dropped and the father does not reappear in the story, which may leave some children wondering if a fine is so terrible as to be too awful to explain.

Illustrated with clear colorful homey pictures by Kim Justinen, *Red and Purple on My Feet* would be useful in discussing choices in the classroom, home, or Sunday School.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

Corey, Dorothy. *Will There Be a Lap for Me?*
Illustrated by Nancy Poydar. Albert
 Whitman, 1992. ISBN 0807591106.
 Paperbound, \$4.95. PS.

Sitting on Mother's lap has to be the best place of all. It's perfect for "resting and talking and listening to stories and watching the birds." But Kyle realizes that Mother's lap is disappearing! It has something to do with the new baby and the room the baby needs to grow. Kyle thinks that having a little brother or sister will be great, but he still misses his mother's lap. When at last his baby brother Matt arrives, Kyle finds that his mother is very busy, almost too busy to offer him his favorite place to sit. Almost—but not quite!

Will There Be a Lap for Me? is a great read-aloud book, as well as being appropriate for the early reader. It portrays the tender yet sometimes anxious feelings an older sibling may go through as the family prepares for and finally brings home a new baby. Dorothy Corey writes the text simply yet sensitively as she takes the reader to its very important conclusion: yes, there indeed is enough room and love in a home for more than one child! Even if Mother's lap isn't always available.

The illustrations by Nancy Poydar match the text with their bright yet tender portrayals of family life. Each page depicts a homey, caring place where security and love are freely offered.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Mary McKinney
 Freelance Writer
 Port Orchard, Washington

Crozat, François. *I Am a Little Giraffe.*
 (Barron's Little Animal Series). Barron's
 Educational Series, 1995. ISBN 0812064208.
 Hardbound, \$8.95. Order direct, 1-800-645-
 3476. PS - Gr. 1.

I Am a Little Giraffe is written from the perspective of a baby giraffe sharing information on his environment and physical characteristics. The text is very simple and large, making it easy to read to young children. The oversize pages are thick cardboard with old-fashioned, colorful illustrations. The illustrations display the African landscape and other animals that share the habitat with the giraffe.

This book would work well as a read-aloud with its large illustrations and text. There are some difficult words within the text that may stump some early readers but it is a book clearly targeting young children.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Sally Kuhns
 Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
 Bremerton, Washington

**Ednerle, Judith Ross and Stephanie Gordon
 Tessler.** *Francis the Earthquake Dog.*
Illustrated by Brooke Scuaer. Chronicle
 Books, 1996. ISBN 0811806308. Hardbound,
 \$13.95. PS - Gr. 4.

You will experience the rumbling, tumbling Great Earthquake of 1906 in this book through its wonderfully descriptive text and tremendously powerful illustrations. It is definitely a read-it-again-and-again book.

Edward, the son of a San Francisco hotel chef, befriends a little lost dog who becomes even more lost within the maze of a huge hotel. At the time of the earthquake, the little dog remains lost in the hotel and is buried in the basement by rubble. Edward searches and worries about the dog for days.

On returning to the remains of the hotel, Edward and his father hear a wailing and are able to dig under the rubble to retrieve the dog. Edward is given permission to keep him and aptly names him *Francis, the Earthquake Dog*.

This book is effective in producing the feeling of an earthquake experience. It is interesting also in that the story is based on an actual incident that occurred in the 1906 quake when a small terrier was found in the basement of the St. Francis Hotel.

The beautiful illustrations are bold, colorful, and unusually angled creating a topsy-turvy sense of movement so perfect for this earthquake story. This book will delight readers with reading pleasure and entertaining information on this frequent natural phenomenon.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Arlene Neal
 Teacher, Covenant School
 Granite Falls, North Carolina

A First Picture Book of Nursery Rhymes.
Illustrated by Elizabeth Harbour. Viking,
 1995. ISBN 0670850306. Hardbound, \$17.99.
 PS - Gr. 3.

A First Book of Nursery Rhymes, illustrated by Elizabeth Harbour, is everything a child's first

encounter with nursery rhymes should be. This satisfying collection is nicely varied, combining such cherished favorites as Humpty Dumpty, looking rather smug on his wall, with less familiar gems like Hoddly Poddley or Ding-dong Bell. All of the selections, without exception, display the timeless quality shared by all good nursery rhymes, and they only improve with repetition.

Each selection is graced by its own illustration, sometimes a full two-page spread, at other times a round, self-contained bubble of soft color. Often a particular detail will spill from the frame, to perch delicately amongst the words on the page. The illustrations are a perfect blend of old-world formality and flights of fancy; the structure and symmetry of the pictures complement the structured rhythm of the verses. The end product is reminiscent of an English garden.

The hard cover and sturdy binding will stand up to many readings, and the one-page table of contents will permit quick access when a particular selection is requested.

This collection will be a favorite with those who are new to nursery rhymes as well as those who wish to revisit childhood memories.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Sylvia Stopforth
 Librarian, Trinity Western University
 Langley, British Columbia, Canada

Friend, Catherine. *My Head Is Full of Colors.*
Illustrated by Kiki. Hyperion Paperbacks for
 Children, 1994. ISBN 0786810718.
 Paperbound, \$4.95. K - Gr. 4.

Maria wakes up each morning to discover that during the night her brown hair has either turned into colors, books, animals, or people. This is scary at first, but Maria soon learns about all kinds of different things relating to what is in her hair. Maria's hair turns brown at the end of the story. Her mother reassures Maria that she is a unique person unlike anyone else.

My Head Is Full of Colors is an eye-catching book designed in brilliant colors that will capture the attention of children. Each page is full of lively colors to keep a child turning the pages even if they cannot read. It is ideal for a read along book to use with a parent and child, or for an early reader as the section of words are kept short on every page. It will help to reinforce self esteem in each child who reads or hears the story.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Dorcas Walker
 Freelance Writer
 Jamestown, Tennessee

Hall, Katy and Lisa Eisenberg. *Sheepish Riddles.* Dial Books for Young Readers, 1996. ISBN 0803715366. Reinforced Binding, \$12.99. Gr. 2 - 4.

There are two groups of people in the world: those who enjoy puns, and those who don't. For those in the first group, *Sheepish Riddles* by Katy Hall and Lisa Eisenberg is a treasure-trove. Some jokes are chestnuts, others, groaners. Every page features the star of the show: sheep!

The format is question-and-answer in the best joke-telling tradition, i. e., "What did the sheep say to the grass?" "It's been nice gnawing you." In the true test of authenticity, a nine-year-old punster declared the book "awesome!"

The pictures by R. W. Alley are the finishing touch in this forty-eight paged book. The illustrations lend a cartoon quality, a visual chuckle at the absurdity of the riddles.

Sheepish Riddles is part of the Dial Easy-to-Read series. Other books include *Batty Riddles*, *Snakey Riddles*, *Grizzly Riddles*, and *Buggy Riddles*. The series need not be read in order.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Su Hagerty
Freelance Writer
Issaquah, Washington

Harper, Isabelle. *My Cats Nick & Nora.* Illustrated by Barry Moser. The Blue Sky Press/Scholastic, 1995. ISBN 0590476203. Hardbound, \$14.95. PS - Gr. 2.

Isabelle Harper, oldest granddaughter of the illustrator, Barry Moser, tells of her afternoon adventures with her cousin Emmie and her two patient cats, Nick and Nora. The afternoon includes playing school and dressing Nick and Nora up for a birthday party. The busy day ends with a nap for both the cats and girls.

My Cats Nick & Nora has no lesson to teach or moral to convey, but does give the reader a chance to share in Isabelle's and Emmie's carefree childhood on a Sunday afternoon. Nick and Nora are patient and loving pets who put up with being dressed in doll clothes and driven in a doll carriage.

This is a pleasant read aloud book, but may prove hard for the early reader due to the use of contractions and ellipses.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Karla J. Kessell
Librarian, Mount Vernon Nazarene College
Mount Vernon, Ohio

Hartman, Bob. *The One and Only Delgado Cheese.* Illustrated by Donna Kae Nelson. Lion Publishing, 1993. ISBN 0745924050. Hardbound, \$13.95. K - Gr. 3.

"From the stages of Zanzibar, Madrid, and Gay Paree—the One and Only Delgado Cheese!"

Well, actually, it's only Harvey Merritt, from Edward Everett Horton Elementary School, a third-grade student who is unhappily convinced that he's "just plain normal." But now that he's moved to a new school, he's determined to change that, and the school talent show seems like the perfect opportunity. But where to start? After all, a talent show requires talent, and Harvey is just plain normal.

Fortunately, he has a hidden resource in his Great Uncle Kaz. The greatest thing about Uncle Kaz is that he has the ability to make Harvey seem special, even to himself. Although he is wheelchair-bound and confined to his bedroom, Uncle Kaz has a personality that can't be suppressed. A former preacher, he peppers his speech with lively imagery borrowed from the Bible.

When Harvey comes up with a stage name for the talent show, "The One and Only Delgado Cheese," which is also the title Hartman has given his book, Uncle Kaz responds with typical enthusiasm: "Strange but wonderful. Like the cherubim and seraphim. Like manna in the wilderness. Like your Aunt Minnie's spoon collection."

As they discuss Harvey's act, Uncle Kaz shares the true secret to discovering God-given talents: start with whatever brings you joy. Well, there is one thing that gives Harvey joy: cartwheels!

With his uncle's help, he fleshes out his act a little, and goes on to prove to everyone, including himself, that he is much more than just plain normal.

Readers of all ages will empathize with Harvey's self-doubts, and will enjoy meeting Great Uncle Kaz, whose generous character is skillfully brought to life by the author. Hartman's story warmly portrays the grace and love that can only be experienced when we reach out to others.

Although the ease with which Harvey's insecurities are resolved is somewhat simplistic, by the end of the story one feels that life is not quite so frightening after all.

Like Harvey himself, Donna Kae Nelson's illustrations are far from "just plain normal." The vibrant colors and softened outlines bring warmth and exuberance to Hartman's text. Some pages seem to glow, due to Nelson's effective use of light and shadow. On several occasions, the faces of the characters are almost life-size, so that the reader feels drawn into the tale. The generous proportions make this book a good story-time candidate. The hard cover and fairly sturdy binding will stand up to many readings.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Sylvia Stopforth
Librarian, Trinity Western University
Langley, British Columbia, Canada

Hickman, Martha Whitmore. *Robert lives with His Grandparents.* Illustrated by Tim Hinton. Albert Whitman, 1995. ISBN 0807570842. Hardbound, \$14.95. K - Gr. 4.

The sad dysfunctional state of many American families is portrayed in *Robert Lives With His Grandparents*. Robert, a young African-American boy, is being raised by his grandparents because of his abandonment by his father, his parents' divorce, and drug related neglect by his mother. Robert's maternal grandparents ask the mother if he can come to live with them. She numbly consents, and Robert agrees to leave when the grandparents assure him that his mother can come to visit when she gets better and that his father will know where to find him.

In one poignant picture, Robert is shown sleeping in the same bed his mother used when she was his age, and he goes to sleep thinking of her. He suffers embarrassment at school because his "parents" are old, and he covers up his living situation around the neighborhood kids.

Robert is able to accept his circumstances when his grandmother visits the school on Parent's Day. Due to the sensitivity and compassion of his classroom teachers, Robert discovers that he isn't the only student in his class whose family is 'different' somehow. Several of the children live with grandparents or other relatives. In closure, Robert's grandmother becomes one of the adopted classroom grandmothers.

This book deals with sensitive but common contemporary issues in family life. Considering the complexities of disintegrating families, this book would best be used by parents or teachers with children.

Tim Hinton, in his first attempt at children's book illustration, is highly successful in the use of warm and effective watercolor scenes.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 4

Arlene Neal
Teacher, Covenant School
Granite Falls, North Carolina

Hunt, Angela Elwell. *The Singing Shepherd.* Illustrated by Peter Palagonia. Lion Publishing, 1992. ISBN 0745922244. Hardbound, \$14.95. PS - G. 2.

This is the tale of Jareb, a young shepherd who helped his older brothers tend their father's sheep on the hillsides of Bethlehem. Jareb stood out from his brothers for two reasons: one, he was often afraid at night because the nighttime was filled with many fearsome things—dark shadows, the noises of jackals howling and the eerie hooting of owls; and two, Jareb sang to cover his fear. Singing would not be bad, but Jareb couldn't really sing. His voice was squeaky. His brothers called it "yowling" but agreed that the sheep didn't mind. Jareb, because of his fears, turned down the chance to go to

Bethlehem to see the Savior. Instead he decided to stay with the sheep. But when his brothers returned with the wonderful news of the Savior, Jareb was sorry that he didn't go.

Several days later he decided to go by himself to Bethlehem in search of the baby, only to discover that an angel had already warned the young family that King Herod was sending soldiers to kill all the baby boys in Bethlehem. Jareb offered to smuggle the baby out of the city gate in the sling he used for newborn lambs. His pathway is blocked by a huge guard who said, "We're looking for baby boys. What is that you're carrying?" Jareb didn't lie but said his sling was for baby lambs. Then he told the guard how famous he was for his singing. And he burst into song. Of course the guard requested that he stop the noise at once and be on his way. When Jareb met Mary and Joseph at the well outside the city Mary's words blessed him. "You are a brave young man. And your voice is a blessing from God."

The illustrations are simple, and in somber colors because many of them are depicting the night. The story shows how children can overcome fear by trusting in God.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Helen Hunter
Freelance Writer
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

King, Stephen Michael. *A Special Kind of Love.* Scholastic, 1995. ISBN 0590676814. Hardbound, \$15.95. PS - Gr. 1.

How shall I say I love you? Stephen Michael King tells of *A Special Kind of Love* which does not need words to be expressed. He uses watercolors, black ink, and colored pencils for the sweeping sky, sea, and landscapes that form a backdrop for the son to receive the special love from his father. This man who loved boxes built many wonderful things for his son. Other people thought the man strange, but not his son.

As a child, Stephen Michael King suffered from partial hearing loss. Because of this he is able to effectively communicate other ways of expressing feelings. This book says you are special and will be appreciated by children who are looking for someone to say I care.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Marie Knaupp
Retired Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

Lindman, Maj. *Snipp, Snapp, Snurr and the Reindeer.* ISBN 080757497X.

—*Snipp, Snapp, Snurr and the Yellow Sled.* ISBN 0807574996.

Albert Whitman, 1995. Paperbound, \$6.95. PS - Gr. 2.

Snipp, Snapp, and Snurr, the Swedish characters from the 1930's are back in print. Young readers can once again enjoy *Snip, Snapp, Snurr and the Yellow Sled*, and *Snip, Snapp, Snurr and the Reindeer*.

The Yellow Sled begins with the three boys walking through town and spotting a yellow sled in the store window. They know they can't ask their mother to buy it because they have just received new, tall boots. They decide to work at home to earn the sled. With diligence the boys keep their contract. Two weeks later they return to the store to buy their sled. A young crying boy, whose father can't afford the sled, wins their hearts. The triplets give him their new purchase. The boys will spend the next two weeks working at home because now they know how. Another sled will then be purchased for them.

In *The Reindeer*, the triplets take a vacation in Lapland. The boys are exposed to cross country skiing, down hill skiing, and the people of Lapland. The triplets are lost in a snowstorm but soon are rescued by a faithful dog, a Laplander boy, and his reindeer. The reader might notice Snipp, Snapp, and Snurr's parents never seem to have looked for the lost boys.

Both Snipp, Snapp, Snurr books are wholesome reading. However, the characters may seem too good for today's readers even though parents will see the triplets as great behavior examples. The plots are interesting to a child, but the dialogue may sound unnatural. The text in each book fills the right hand page in large blocks.

The illustrations from *The Sled* differ from those in *The Reindeer*. The books having been written two decades apart accounts for the changes. The lines and color are heavy in *The Reindeer* reflecting the late 1950's as opposed to the light watercolor and thin pen line of the 1930's. It is fun to note the boys wearing high boots, shorts, and long socks during the winter. It is interesting to see Laplander culture, including their tents and pet reindeer.

Some explanation to the child, prior to reading this set of books, could be beneficial. Finding the differences between Finland and the US, life in the 30's, 50's, and 90's, and how writing styles have changed can be interesting to both parent and child.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Lorie Ann Grover
Freelance Writer
Kent, Washington

Lohans, Alison. *Nathaniel's Violin.* Illustrated by Marlene Watson. Orca Book Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1551430649. Paperbound, \$6.95. PS - Gr. 2.

You cannot help but want to hum and tap your feet as you read *Nathaniel's Violin*. As a boy, Nathaniel is given a violin by a mysterious old woman in exchange for eggs and cream. At first the violin does not sound too impressive as Nathaniel makes his first attempts at playing the instrument. But soon even the farm itself seems to hum along to the lively tune of the violin.

Nathaniel grows up and leaves the farm to become a doctor in the city. Life is lonely for Nathaniel's parents until one day the mother picks up the violin and begins to play it. The father cannot stand to hear the music as it reminds him of Nathaniel, so the old woman plays it in the barn. After his wife's death, the farmer's heart aches with loneliness. Nothing seems to ease the pain until he finds the old violin and learns to play it too. The circle of life comes round when the farmer dies and Nathaniel takes the violin to his family in the city. The last illustration shows Nathaniel's daughter playing the violin in a concert hall while the mysterious old woman from the beginning of the story watches from the audience.

Alison Lohans' tender and delightful story can be used to teach many lessons from the seasons of life to the joy of music. Her descriptions of the farm, its family, and the violin help to illustrate the gift of love and friendship the violin brings to lonely hearts. Marlene Watson's bright and cheerful pictures seem to leap from the pages as she has allowed the figures in each picture to break out of well defined borders. Small, secondary illustrations help to emphasize each part of the story. *Nathaniel's Violin* is a story with much rhythm and movement which will encourage young children to move and sing to the tune of the old violin.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Susan Robinson
Librarian, Delaware Co. Christian School
Newtown Square, Pennsylvania

LoMonaco, Palmyra. *Night Letters.* Illustrated by Normand Chartier. Dutton Children's Books, 1996. ISBN 0525453873. Hardbound, \$14.99. PS - Gr. 2.

Each night, Lily heads for her backyard with paper and pencil to copy down the messages that her friends have left for her during the day. Messages come from many sources; the lines in the dust the ants have made, the design on the wings of a moth, and the bark of the sycamore tree. As Lily sits under the sycamore tree pondering what she has copied in her notebook,

she thinks of winter, a time when the night letters will disappear and composes a response to her friends.

Night Letters is a well-written story of imagination and innocence. By not cluttering this simple tale with any big issues or concepts, Palmyra LoMonaco has embodied some of the best things about being a child. Adding beautifully to the text are the illustrations by Normand Chartier. Children and adults alike will enjoy reading, and even seeking out their own Night Letters.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Elizabeth Coleman
Freelance Writer
Tumwater, Washington

London, Jonathan. *The Village Basket Weaver.* Illustrated by George Crespo. Dutton's Childrens Books, 1996. ISBN 0525453148. Hardbound, \$14.99. PS - Gr. 3.

The importance of tradition and passing on what you know is beautifully demonstrated in *The Village Basket Weaver*. Carpio is an old, old man in a small village in Belize. His grandson, Tavio, is fascinated by the ability of Carpio's ancient hands to slowly weave an incredibly long basket. As the days pass, Carpio continues his weaving in the company of his grandson, simultaneously weaving his own memories and love of basket-making into Tavio.

A gentle and delightful book, *The Village Basket Weaver* teaches valuable lessons about experience, respect, mutual dependence, and the importance of individual contribution to a family. But the prose, like the intensely-colored illustrations that accompany it, is never preachy or maudlin. Children interested in ethnic traditions will especially enjoy this tale of passing on a tradition.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Georgia Beaverson
Freelance Writer
Madison, Wisconsin

Martin, Antoinette Truglio. *Famous Seaweed Soup.* Illustrated by Nadine Bernard Westcott. Albert Whitman, 1993. ISBN 0807522643. Paperbound, \$5.95. K - Gr. 2.

Arriving with her family at the beach on a hot Sunday, Sara begins the process of making her Famous Seaweed Soup. At each point in recipe, Sara asks for help. Each time, her mother, father, and baby sister claim to be busy with other things. As a result, Sara decides she can do it herself. After the soup is cooked and served, Sara determines that this was her best effort yet, because she did it all by herself.

The ink and watercolor illustrations by Nadine Bernard Westcott match nicely with the tone of this fun story. *Famous Seaweed Soup* will tempt

small children, caught in the "help me" and "play with me" phase, to try some things on their own. Older children will be inspired to make their own version of soup using supplies from their backyard or playground. Antoinette Truglio Martin has written a story children will enjoy hearing all year long.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Elizabeth Coleman
Freelance Writer
Tumwater, Washington

Maslac, Evelyn Hughes. *Finding a Job for Daddy.* Illustrated by Kay Life. Albert Whitman, 1996. ISBN 0807524379. Hardbound, \$12.95. Gr. 1 - 3.

After getting laid off, Laura's daddy is looking for a new job. Each night Laura helps him look through the newspaper and at each interview he wears his lucky tie—Laura's favorite—but no job offers come. Laying in bed one night, Laura gets an idea to cheer him up. With the help of her teacher, Laura makes a want ad and resume for someone to be her daddy. After interviewing with Laura, her father promises to always be there and be her daddy. Laura gives him the job as her daddy.

Finding a Job for Daddy presents a family crisis in a comforting and realistic way. No matter the employment status of their parents, all children will enjoy Evelyn Hughes Maslac's depiction of their feelings and thoughts. Through Laura's curiosity, children can learn what a resume, interview, and other job related words mean. The watercolor illustrations drawn by Kay Life are almost like photographs, adding depth to the story. This is a charming treatment of a child's perspective in the face of a family crisis.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Elizabeth Coleman
Freelance Writer
Tumwater, Washington

E. Riordan, James. *My G-r-r-r-reat Uncle Tiger.* Illustrated by Alex Ayliffe. Dial Books for Young Readers, 1996. ISBN 0803718284. Hardbound, \$14.99. PS - Gr. 2.

When Marmaduke, the marmalade cat, finds a picture of a tiger, she immediately claims him as her great uncle and begins to boast to all the other cats in the building of her famous relation. However her boasting may backfire as her feline friends challenge her to take them to the zoo to meet her Great Uncle Tiger. Young children will giggle over the expressive faces of each cat as the cats trek through the zoo finding purple hippos, pink flamingoes, alligators, snakes, giraffes, and various other animals, all the time wondering which one is the Great Uncle Tiger. Marmaduke meanwhile is describing each attribute of his uncle tiger in relation to the other animals. "No, no, no," said Albert with a deep laugh. "That lofty beanpole is a giraffe. Besides...Tigers have stripes." When at last the troupe of cats meets the great tiger, Marmaduke timidly advances toward him to introduce them. The Great Uncle Tiger opened his great jaws to reveal two rows of big white teeth. "Grrr-rrr-rrr-eeetings," at which Marmaduke and his whole feline entourage beat a quick retreat to the safety of their own home. Marmaduke never again boasts of his Great Uncle Tiger.

The simple but colorful collage illustrations of Alex Ayliffe combined with James Riordan's lively text will keep the young reader returning to this book over and over again.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

F. Oliver, Gary J. and H. Norman Wright. *Hip Hop and His Famous Face.* Illustrated by Sharon Dahl. (Wonder Woods). Victor Books, 1995. ISBN 1564764591. Hardbound, \$7.99. PS - Gr. 2.

Hip Hop and His Famous Face by Gary Oliver and H. Norman Wright is an ideal book for teaching biblical principles in an entertaining story format. Each book in the series "Wonder Woods" focuses on a different forest character working through an emotion that children commonly experience.

Hip Hop is a rabbit who has a problem with anger and whose story is based on Ephesians 4:26-27. One day Hip Hop joins his friends for playtime. They're looking for something to do. Hip Hop suggests chasing butterflies, but Elwood Elk is no good at chasing butterflies. Each of his suggestions are turned down and Hip Hop feels himself getting an angry. His face turns red, his eyes get squinty, and he begins stomping and snapping at his friends. Soon they don't want to play with him at all and Hip Hop is left alone. As a very lonely bunny, he decides to take the advice

of Blue Jay and tell his friends how he feels next time he gets angry.

The illustrations by Sharon Dahl of one of the best parts of this book. They are bright, colorful, funny and attractive. They enhance the dialogue and communicate Hip Hop's feelings to the reader.

The final pages contain suggestions for parents in helping a child cope with anger. These include questions to discuss with children and scriptural references on dealing with anger.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Donna Brown
Church Librarian
Portland, Oregon

Parry, Linda. *The Baby Jesus. Illustrated by Alan Parry. (A Touch-and-Feel Book).* Abingdon Press, 1995. ISBN 0687001277. Board Book, \$8.95. 18 months - PS.

The Baby Jesus, a touch-and-feel board book, gently leads young readers through the familiar story of Jesus' birth. Touch activities include lamb's wool, several lift-and-see flaps, a rough shepherd's cloak, and even a scratch-and-sniff patch. The book seems sturdy enough for little ones past the everything-goes-in-the-mouth stage. The text is simple and fun to read, written in the present tense. The illustrations glow with soft colors, although Mary, Joseph, and the rest all appear disconcertingly Anglo-Saxon.

The book would certainly be an enjoyable bedtime story to read to an active little one during the Christmas season.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Georgia Beaverson
Freelance Writer
Madison, Wisconsin

Prayers for Little Hearts. Illustrated by Elena Kucharik. Tyndale House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 0842349707. Hardbound, \$9.99. Birth - K.

Each page of this small devotional book for young children contains a short prayer and Bible reference, appropriately illustrated by Elena Kucharik of Care Bear fame. The prayers are truly short, making them good vehicles for beginning devotionals. Parents can use the designated Scripture verses to expand the prayers as children grow older. The subjects covered by the prayers are also appropriate for the preschool crowd, and include loving others, misbehaving, fear, forgiveness, and the wonderful world God created.

While Ms. Kucharik has touched thousands with her Care Bear illustrations, some people may find the pictures in *Prayers for Little Hearts* impossibly cute and arch. However, the book is an age-appropriate beginning devotional.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Georgia Beaverson
Freelance Writer
Madison, Wisconsin

Repp, Gloria. *Noodle Soup. Illustrated by John Roberts. Bob Jones University Press, 1994. ISBN 0890845824. Paperbound, \$5.49. K - Gr. 3.*

Narrating the story of his family's move from the country to the city, Jon tells how members of his family adjust to their new life. While there are things about the country Jon misses, he loves riding the elevator up to their apartment. He also meets a new friend named Skeet Hart. Lizz and Bett, his younger twin sisters, like the new playground and make a lot of friends. His father's job is the reason they moved and now Dad is working long hours. Jon's mother tries at first to paint the apartment and adjust, but after a bad cold, she can't seem to regain her strength or enthusiasm. When Skeet's mother asks about his mom, Jon tells Mrs. Hart his mother is still sick and never eats. With the help of Skeet and Jon, Mrs. Hart makes a huge pot of chicken noodle soup for Jon's mother. Through this gift of kindness and love, his mother's health improves and she begins to sing and cook again.

Written almost conversationally, *Noodle Soup* by Gloria Repp is a satisfying tale of how to live out our lives as Christians. At the end of the book, the publisher has made a note of how this story relates to Ephesians 4:32, "Be ye kind to one another, tenderhearted..." While there are a number of biblical lessons one could glean from this story, the additional note will help teachers and parents tie the lesson in the book to a specific verse. The illustrations by John Roberts add nicely to the story and the recipe for Grandma Hart's Famous Noodle Soup is also included.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Elizabeth Coleman
Freelance Writer
Tumwater, Washington

Rock, Lois. *Bible Words About Happiness for Children. ISBN 0745933459.*

—*Bible Worlds About Love for Children. ISBN 0745933467.*

Illustrated by Claire Henley. Lion Publishing, 1996. Hardbound, \$8.99. PS.

Lois Rock has introduced the youngest listeners to 1 Corinthians 13 and Matthew 5:3-12. *Bible Words About Happiness for Children* presents the beatitudes. *Bible Words about Love for Children* amplifies Paul's writing on love. At the conclusion of both books, the Good News Bible is quoted.

Whether the verse says, "Love is patient and kind," or "Happy are those who forgive others," Rock gives a description of the meaning of the verse. She includes a child-like prayer incorporating the theme. For "Love is not jealous," Rock writes, "Someone who loves you wants the best for you. But a jealous person hates to see you enjoy good things." The prayer placed next to the text says,

Dear God
You love me
and so you want the best for me.
I want to live for you.

Many of the explanations and prayers offer children assurance of salvation. *Happiness for Children* begins with the words, "Be God's friend." It continues, "You belong to God." *Love for Children* starts with, "God loves everyone in the world." She continues, "Dear God, You love me."

Claire Henley has created vibrant, and bold illustrations for both books. The scenes are engaging and enjoyable. They naturally fit Lois Rock's text.

A number of denominations will be eager to use these books with preschoolers. Parents and children will enjoy them together.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Lorie Ann Grover
Freelance Writer
Kent, Washington

Rock, Lois. *A First Look at Prayer. Illustrated by Carolyn Cox. (A First Look).* Lion Publishing, 1996. ISBN 0745931863. Hardbound, \$6.99. Gr. 1 -3.

Familiar experiences, with questions directed to the young reader or listener, lay the foundation for establishing what prayer is all about. Lois Rock skillfully relates Scripture and children's everyday life to how and why we pray. Colorful water color illustrations by Carolyn Cox ground prose to reality.

The author defines what prayer is through many concrete examples and describes how and why we pray. She uses numerous references to

Scripture to reinforce her examples of experiences children are familiar with ,although in most instances she doesn't give the exact biblical reference, simply noting the book from the Bible in which it originates. Scripture quotations are written in easy-to-understand language for children. Beginning with being welcomed into God's family, she proceeds to discuss how we feel and respond to the beauties of nature, our needs and relationships, and our sin.

Text and pictures are done in such a way that children will respond with discussion and questions of their own. This is an excellent tool for parent or teacher to use in exploring prayer and the Christian life with children.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Mary Jarvis
Freelance Writer
Marysville, Washington

Silver, Maggie. *Who Lives Here?* Sierra Club Books for Children, 1995. ISBN 0871563711. Hardbound, \$10.95. K - Gr. 3.

Who Lives Here? is a beautifully illustrated book that has children guessing what animal made the home pictured. The answer is disclosed by lifting the well-camouflaged flap revealing the creature. The text provides clues about where the home is found and describes the animal within.

The illustrations match the quality one has come to expect from Sierra Club wildlife photography; however these are warm and colorful drawings rather than photos. *Who Lives Here?* would fit in well with a curriculum study of habitats in the lower grade levels. The variety of wildlife the interesting forms their habitats take would make an excellent unit introduction.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Sally Kuhns
Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

Spelman, Cornelia. *After Charlotte's Mom Died.* Illustrated by Judith Friedman. Albert Whitman, 1996. ISBN 0807501964. Hardbound, \$12.95. K - Gr. 4.

Beautifully illustrated and sensitively written, *After Charlotte's Mom Died* portrays the struggle a daughter and father go through to try and recover from a death in the family. Six months after Charlotte's mother dies in a car accident, her father is withdrawn, moody, and excessively busy. Charlotte's feelings of abandonment have increased because her dad pays little attention to her, often ignoring her or seeming not to see her.

As a result, Charlotte has no one but her teddy bear to go to with some of the difficult feelings she experiences, such as anger and her own fear of dying. Finally, Charlotte gets her father's attention by misbehaving on the playground,

acting out some of the frustration and anger that have filled her heart. The two begin a process of grief counseling and repairing their relationship.

After Charlotte's Mom Died doesn't flinch away from looking at the hard issues surrounding a parent's death. The prose is clear, easy-to-understand, and factual. With sensitivity and care, the author reports Charlotte's difficult feelings, explaining them in a way children can understand. The book is excellent, exploring the depths of grief but also offering hope to the grieving child. The only problem a Christian parent might have is that God is not mentioned as a source of comfort.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Georgia Beaverson
Freelance Writer
Madison, Wisconsin

Spohn, Kate. *Dog and Cat Shake a Leg.* (Viking Easy-to-Read; Level 2). Viking/Penguin, 1996. ISBN 0670867586. Hardbound, \$11.99. K - Gr. 2.

Dog and Cat Shake a Leg is an easy book for young readers. Dog and Cat are two friends whose adventures are detailed in four chapters in a similar fashion to the Frog and Toad series. This book falls short of the endearing qualities that capture young readers of Frog and Toad with their humor and well-defined personalities. The chapter that was most appealing was one in which they go shopping for a hat for Cat and try on a wide variety of styles. It ends with Cat surprising Dog by purchasing him a cowboy hat.

The illustrations are rather simple and childish but complement the text and are pleasant. This book would fit in a library where more early reader books are needed to provide more choices for emergent readers enamored with the idea of chapter books.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Sally Kuhns
Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

Ward, Nick. *Don't Worry, Grandpa.* Barron's, 1995. ISBN 0812094255. Hardbound, \$12.95. Order direct, 1-800-645-3476. PS - Gr. 2.

When a thunder and lightning storm approaches, the tables are turned from the usual scenario when it is young Charlie who comforts his grandpa's fears. When Grandpa voices his dislike of thunderstorms, Charlie answers "Don't worry, Grandpa...it's only the giants coming out to play." When the thunder cracks loudly overhead, Charlie reasons, "It's only those giants playing marbles." And when the lightning splits the sky, Charlie chuckles "Don't worry, Grandpa. It's only the giants lighting their sparklers." When Grandpa grows concerned over the amount of rain falling from the sky, Charlie

explains it away by describing the water fight the giants are having. And so the great role reversal continues with Charlie colorfully erasing Grandpa's fears with his giant tales...or has Grandpa just employed a gigantic psychological coup by turning Charlie's attention away from his own stormy fears?

Children will delight in the colorful illustrations of the giants at play during the raging storm and their final exit from the back page of the book. This humorous picture book by Nick Ward is sure to be a winner with children and grandparents alike.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

Winch, John. *The Old Man Who Loved to Sing.* Scholastic, 1993. ISBN 0590226401. Hardbound, \$14.95. K - Gr. 2.

Too much city noise! "The Old Man Who Loved To Sing" retires to a secluded valley. Singing, whistling, playing the gramophone, he wins the love of his nearest neighbors: wombats, koalas, cows, mice, turtles, frilled neck lizards, sparrows, camels, a panoply of Australian animals. As the years pass the old man's forgetfulness gets worse. But this does not worry the animals. They love him just as he is. One sad day, in a hushed valley filled with silent animals, the old man cannot remember the important thing he has forgotten. That's all right though, because his friends know. First the kangaroos drum, then frogs croak, and birds sing. With love for their old man, all the animals make music. The old man hears his friends, remembers what is missing, and sings.

An Australian book, *The Old Man Who Loved To Sing* presents a joyful solution to a problem common world wide. It is a colorful look at the joy of learning to love and help each other; a picture of active friendship reaching out in just the right way. Illustrator and author John Winch presents his story with large paintings illustrated by few words. Vivid, busy and engrossing, Winch's pictures are treasure hunts. What new wonders can we see this time? His depiction of Australian rural life and domestic and wild animals will delight American children and adults.

The Old Man Who Loved To Sing has a reinforced binding. Useful for displaying, the dust cover is attractive and eye-catching. The simple outlines and clear basic lines of the Australian animals will appeal to children who like to sketch.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Donna Eggett
Freelance Writer
Maiden, North Carolina

F. Wright, H. Norman and Gary J. Oliver. *Ric & Rac's Woodland Adventure*. Illustrated by Sharon Dahl. (Wonder Woods). Victor Books, 1995. ISBN 1564764591. Hardbound, \$7.99. PS - Gr. 2.

Learning about fear is the theme of Ric and Rac's Woodland Adventure by H. Norman Wright and Gary J. Oliver. Raccoon brothers, Ric and Rac, hear scary noises and see frightening sights, only to learn that most of them are their friendly forest neighbors. Singing their, "Fear can be a friend, fear can be a foe," song as they explore, the raccoons learn when fear is a good thing and when it is unnecessary.

Children will enjoy the cute animal illustrations by Sharon Dahl. The text, however, could prove to be a bit wordy for smaller children. Included is a parent's guide to discussing fear with children. The guide alone is almost more valuable than the actual story.

Among the suggestions are having children memorize various Bible verses dealing with fear. Parents will want to use this book carefully, especially with small children who are susceptible to the power of suggestion. If the dark and strange noises don't bother them now, after reading this book it may occur to some children that perhaps they should be afraid.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Elizabeth Coleman

Freelance Writer

Tumwater, Washington

Yolen, Jane. *Letting Swift River Go*. Illustrated by Barbara Cooney. Little, Brown and Company, 1992. ISBN 0316968609. Paperbound, \$4.95. PS - Gr. 3.

Letting Swift River Go lyrically tells the story of the flooding of the Swift River and its Massachusetts towns to make way for the Quabbin Reservoir. In softly nostalgic prose, the reader follows Sally Jane as first she outlines the seasons of the Swift River valley. Sally moves on to describe the town meeting that decides the valley's fate, then sadly describes how the graves in the churchyard are dug up and, one by one, moved to another cemetery. The trees, bushes, and buildings are bulldozed to make way for the huge reservoir, which slowly fills the once-lush valley with gently lapping water.

This picture book doesn't just tell the story of the reservoir. It's a story of letting go of childhood and all the pleasures it contained. It's a story of mourning what once was and accepting what now is. The book also illustrates how a far-away need can effect those around the reader.

Both the prose and illustrations are gently nostalgic in the vein of Virginia Lee Burton's *Little House* book. *Letting Swift River Go*

would make a beautiful reading experience for parent, teacher, and child.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Georgia Beaverson

Freelance Writer

Madison, Wisconsin

Ziefert, Harriet. *The Three Little Pigs*. Illustrated by Laura Rader. (Viking Easy-to-Read; Level 2). Viking/Penguin, 1995. ISBN 0670860514. Hardbound, \$11.99. K - Gr. 2.

This simple version of *The Three Little Pigs* is written as an easy reader that will appeal to children, with words that are repetitious in the traditional pattern, yet continue to capture the imagination. The story has each of the first two pigs eaten by the wolf rather than running off to the next pig's home; some may prefer the latter version.

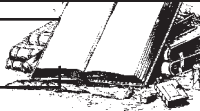
The full page, colorful illustrations are fun--with one pig wearing glasses--and depict the emotions of the characters enhancing the simple words. Children will enjoy the accomplishment of reading a traditional classic.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Sally Kuhns

Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

BOOK REVIEWS



CHILDREN'S FICTION

Ahlberg, Allan. *The Better Brown Stories.* Illustrated by Fritz Wegner. Viking, 1995. ISBN 0670858943. Hardbound, \$12.99. Gr. 3 - 6.

The characters in *The Better Brown Stories* are fed up with their boring story. The Brown family pays a visit to the writer demanding a better tale. Mrs. Brown is tired of having perms, Mr. Brown hates his boring bank job, Betsy doesn't like her name, and Brian wants a dog. The baby, everyone agrees, must not be forgotten. The writer tacks up a note to himself, "Don't forget the baby," and proceeds to give each character a thrilling chapter.

The Better Brown Stories are delightful. Younger readers will enjoy the fantastic tales the writer eventually creates. Older readers can see the way in which a book is written, how the author often interviews his characters. Implausible plots and holes are identified. Leaving many of them, the writer enhances the whimsical mood of the book.

Author Allan Ahlberg lives in England and sets the novel in a little town named Snuggleton-on-Sea. The book has an English flavor because of the retained English vocabulary. One hoovers instead of vacuums, and carries a torch instead of a flashlight. Meanings of unfamiliar words can usually be deciphered from the context, but the more obscure may cause the reader to stop and ask for a definition.

Illustrator Fritz Wegner adds occasional drawings which further develop the text. Added blurbs reveal characters to be pawns forced through a story. "Why did I say that?" and other notations make the reader identify with the characters and recall the writer behind it all.

Ahlberg thanks several authors in his acknowledgments. The five stories in *The Better Brown Stories* reflect those writers and their work. Baby Brown, who is now known as Billy because of a two year time acceleration, flies with his snowman because he has read Raymond Briggs' work, *The Snowman*.

Ahlberg's *The Better Brown Stories* is a great read to be enjoyed by all ages. Even the characters would agree, it is much better than...hoovering.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Lorie Ann Grover
Freelance Writer
Kent, Washington

Bauer, Marion Dane. *A Question of Trust.* Scholastic, 1994. ISBN 0590479237. Paperbound, \$2.99. Gr. 5 - 8.

This book *A Question of Trust* is a very serious book about two young brothers, Brad and Charlie. The main plot deals with the trauma they experience when their mother moves out and into her own apartment. Interwoven with this plot is an equally strong subplot involving the cat Brad and Charlie discover and keep hidden from their father. Matters are further complicated when Cat has two kittens and the boys' involvement creates huge questions with some very difficult answers.

Brad, the older brother and main character in *A Question of Trust*, undergoes a major character change in this novel written by Marion Dane Bauer. Not only do his feelings for his mother run the gamut from extreme animosity to, at the last, a semblance of understanding and forgiveness, but his very values are challenged. His actions at times show very poor judgment and one bad decision leads to another, as is the case in the real world. Brad cheats, lies, and steals, but never are the readers (or Brad himself) left with concept that this is the correct action to take. The concluding chapters give some answers and tie up some loose ends but not all, again reflecting reality.

The book deals with a subject many children are living through today. It is very realistic in its approach and the emotions and reactions of the characters. There are several descriptions of a mother cat giving birth that are quite graphic yet not done offensively.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Cecil Carey
Middle School Librarian
Plano, Illinois

Borntrager, Mary Christner. *Sarah.* (Ellie's People; 8). Herald Press, 1995. ISBN 83619019X. Paperbound, \$7.95. Gr. 4 - Adult.

It's not easy being twelve. It's even harder when you're the oldest girl of five children. It's harder yet if you're an Amish farm girl whose mother is very ill. Though she encounters the difficulties

of her mother's death, a housekeeper's mistreatment of her, a tragic house fire, and much more, Sarah learns and grows through the hard times in the eighth book of the Ellie's People series.

As with any twelve-year-old girl, Sarah yearns for an understanding friend. She finds that friend in Regina Byler, and their friendship is the glue that holds her together through the storms of life. Throughout her mother's long illness, the hired girl Sadie often mistreats Sarah and tensions rise until, when her mother dies, Sarah fears that Sadie will be hired on forever. A house fire brings reconciliation between Sadie and Sarah and they become more than friends. As the years pass and young men look her way, Sarah becomes a lovely young woman with marriage in her future.

Though this is the eighth book in the series and some of the character development, understanding of relationships, and story line background is obviously established in previous books of the series, *Sarah* can nevertheless stand on its own. The customs of the Amish have been developed quite well and the relationships are established sufficiently. Yet, a better grasp of it all would surely come from reading the series from the very beginning.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Susan Adderley
International Ministries, ACSI
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Bowen, Fred. *T.J.'s Secret Pitch.* Illustrated by Jim Thorpe. (An Allstar Sports Story; 1). Peachtree Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1561451193. Paperbound, \$4.95. Gr. 3 - 5.

Author Fred Bowen recalls past baseball greats in *T.J.'s Secret Pitch*. It is Rip Sewell's true story that inspires fictional T.J. to develop an unusual pitch for his own baseball team. Middle grade readers will enjoy this mix of fiction and fact.

T.J. is small and unable to pitch an unhittable fast ball. He has practiced whole-heartedly but can't strike out anyone. T.J.'s grandfather teaches him about Rip Sewell and his eephus pitch used in the 1940's. Again T.J. hits the backyard to practice and pretty soon no one is able to hit his pitches.

T.J.'s Secret Pitch is suspenseful from start to finish. Girls and boys are on T.J.'s team, which makes the novel even more appealing to both sexes. T.J. struggles with other issues familiar to today's young. With his accomplishment, T.J. feels big regardless of his shorter stature. Physical size has nothing to do with his value. He learns to laugh with others.

Bowen offers honest statements of life. T.J.'s father tells him, "I know you feel rotten. But sometimes we can't get what we want no matter how much we want it or how hard we work to get it." Here is a great truth for young people to see. A short conclusion about Rip Sewell offers the reader hope: "Sewell had learned during his baseball career that there is always more than one way to achieve a goal."

T.J.'s Secret Pitch will be enjoyed by baseball lovers and expose the sport to novices. Girls and boys will be entertained, learn a bit of history, and see valuable lessons worked out.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Lorie Ann Grover
Freelance Writer
Kent, Washington

Bray, Marian. *Hayloft Hideout.* (Lassie). Chariot Books, 1996. ISBN 0781402654. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 3 - 6.

Is it ever right to lie? Can stealing be O.K. if you are helping someone as a result? These are the questions that begin running through Sarah Harmon's head as she becomes involved with trying to help a family of six orphans survive in an old, dilapidated barn.

Sarah first stumbles onto the Freedman family's hayloft hideout when she is taking the family dog, Lassie, for a walk after school. They see smoke coming from an abandoned barn and decide to satisfy their curiosity by investigating. They find Briny, a girl in Sarah's fifth grade class, and her four younger brothers and sisters huddled around a metal barrel with a fire built inside. This is the beginning of a friendship between Sarah and the Freedman family, but Sarah is entangled in a web of lying and stealing as she tries to keep the whole thing a secret.

Briny trusts Sarah and explains that both parents are gone and they are at risk of being split up into different foster homes if anyone finds out about their situation.

In the meantime, Jimmy, Sarah's thirteen-year-old brother, is elected to work on the eighth-grade committee in charge of planning the town's Wacky Rodeo. Cal Freedman, Briny's oldest brother, also a part of the rodeo committee, is blamed when all the ticket money they have raised mysteriously disappears. Readers' curiosities will peak at this point as the focus shifts back to Sarah and her involvement with the missing money. Will Sarah continue to dig herself farther into a hole with her lying, or will she break down and tell her parents about the hayloft hideout?

Lassie, an old family favorite from the television series, is a part of Marion Bray's book that sends readers a strong message about the trapping effects of even one little, seemingly innocent, lie. Children in the upper elementary grades will receive good moral training about lying and its consequences and discover God's desire for us to live with honesty and integrity.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Sharla Bartel
Teacher, Faith Christian Academy
Lakewood, Colorado

A Child's Garden of Virtues : Stories About Virtues. Compiled by Peg Augustine. Illustrated by Teresa Harper. Dimensions for Living, 1996. ISBN 068701610X. Hardbound, \$10.00. K - Gr. 2.

A Child's Garden of Virtues is a strikingly beautiful book. Visually it would be a nice addition to any child's room. Beautiful, feminine, full-color illustrations of flowers, birds, butterflies, and cottages are sprinkled throughout this book and the paper is heavyweight and glossy white.

A Child's Garden of Virtues introduces the reader to the virtues of faith, hope, love, loyalty, temperance, courage, prudence, humility, trustworthiness, and responsibility. Each chapter begins by explaining one virtue, then goes on to share two or three stories—scriptural, traditional or modern day—illustrating that virtue. Most chapters also include a relevant scripture quote.

Big words, complex sentences, and even an occasional story might need to be explained by the adult. *A Child's Garden of Virtues* is not near the quality of William Bennett's *Book of Virtues* published by Simon and Schuster in 1993. This is definitely a coffee table book, a grandma give to her granddaughter book, but not necessarily a library book.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Barbara Beyer
International Ministries, ACSI
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Christopher, Matt. *Top Wing.* Illustrated by Marcy Ramsey. Little, Brown, 1994. ISBN 0316141267. Paperbound, \$3.95. Gr. 3 - 5.

A hot soccer game, a house fire, and a misunderstanding between best friends cause Dana Bellamy and his family anguish and confusion. In the book *Top Wing* by Matt Christopher, twelve-year-old Dana and his good friend Benton look forward to a winning season for their team, the Anchors. A fire destroys Benton's home when his parents are gone and Dana's father Hayden Bellamy rescues Benton and his little sister Letitia from the blaze. In so doing, he suffers from smoke inhalation and is hospitalized.

Despite his worry for his father's health, Dana is proud of his dad, delighted his friend Benton is okay, and anxious to turn his thoughts back to soccer. During the next game, however, he is puzzled by Benton ignoring him, especially when he is in good goal-kicking position. Benton's behavior becomes more and more strange. He steals the ball from Dana, won't ever pass it back, and refuses to discuss what is bothering him.

Now Dana has three worries: his father, Benton's bizarre behavior, and the Anchor's loss of three games in a row, largely due to Benton's refusal to be a team player. Benton and his entire family tell the town Mr. Bellamy probably caused the fire as a result of his rewiring the Benton's house. Now the soccer team is really divided: some support Benton, some Dana.

Dana discovers clues that prove his father's innocence and confronts Benton with the accusation that he caused the fire by smoking in the attic. Benton confesses and apologizes to Dana and his family. His parents share in the blame, especially for hurting the Bellamys with their careless talk. The boys still have the championship game to play. This time, working as a real team, the victory is certain. Best of all, the families are friends again.

Top Wing follows in the pattern of the dozens of Christopher sports books: fast action, many details about the specific sport, tense problems, and satisfying resolution. The themes of friction between friends and soccer game competition complement each other. The resolution in the final chapter is believable and satisfying. However, the pages of the book devoted to detailed description of soccer games are perhaps only of great interest to a soccer devotee. Four full-page pencil sketches of soccer play and one of the fire rescue add to the book's appeal, as does its length—170 pages. Three students saw the book lying on our library counter and have already asked to check it out!

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Lynn Harding
 Librarian, Snohomish County Christian School
 Lynnwood, Washington

Cunningham, David. *A Crow's Journey.*
 Albert Whitman, 1996. ISBN 0807513563.
 Hardbound, \$16.95. PS - Gr. 2.

Caught in beautiful poetic rhythm and rhyme, the rippling brook from the melting mountain snows catches the eye of a crow. As he follows the water from mountaintop to ocean, the natural progression of the water's movement becomes a lovely experience of words. Not only is the water flow discussed, but erosion, waterfalls, and fish pools are also mentioned, all in a lovely little illustrated poem.

The illustrations are simple yet almost real, and ending the book with a map brings a completeness to the journey. Both as writer and illustrator, Cunningham did a superb job with a simple lesson. A wonderful taste of meaningful poetry for the young child.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Susan Adderley
 International Ministries, ACIS
 Colorado Springs, Colorado

Davis, Tim. *Mice of the Nine Lives.* (Mice Series; 2). Bob Jones University Press, 1994. ISBN 089084755X. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 2 - 4.

Just when you thought Charles and Oliver, the brave *Mice of the Herring Bone*, were ready for a rest, off they go on another high seas adventure in *Mice of the Nine Lives*. Their friends, Admiral Winchester and his crew of cats in service to the Queen, pick up Captain Tabby and some of his "men" who have been set adrift in the sea when sea dog-pirates hijack their ship, the *Seven Seas*, in the Cattibeian Sea.

The cats decide to search for the pirates and their leader, the dastardly Captain Crag, and take back the *Seven Seas*. They find the ship but through the trickery of sea dogs, Admiral Winchester is taken captive on San Fiero Island. Charles and Oliver devise an ingenious plan for the admiral's rescue which, among other things, includes hiding inside coconut "cannonballs" and almost being sliced in half!

A timely eruption of the volcano on San Fiero also helps the mice and cats rescue the admiral, the *Seven Seas*, and the Queen's honor. The sea dogs and Captain Crag reap what they have sown and are left adrift in the Cattibeian Sea on a small skiff.

The excitement and adventure needed for middle elementary literature are found in this book, and I believe this series is quickly becoming a favorite of this age group of readers. Beautifully executed pen and ink full-page drawings by the author are found throughout the book.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Arlene Neal
 Teacher, Covenant School
 Granite Falls, North Carolina

Davis, Tim. *Mice of the Seven Seas.* (Mice Series; 3). Bob Jones University Press, 1995. ISBN 0890848459. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 2 - 4.

Hoist your sails for the third adventure in this sea-worthy series! Charles and Oliver, the heroic mice you met in *Mice of the Herring Bone* and *Mice of the Nine Lives*, receive an honorary commendation from the Queen and a new rescue mission assignment. When the pirates' parrot steals special orders papers from Admiral Winchester, Charles and Oliver find themselves off for the Great Southern Continent to warn their friends aboard the *Nine Lives*.

They are aided in the search by an old friend, Captain Tabby, who offers to take them on the *Seven Seas* to find the admiral and the *Nine Lives*. The pirate sea dogs of the Red Herring are also pursuing the *Nine Lives* and things start to "heat up" when all three ships converge amid icebergs but are hidden from each other.

Through the help of friendly penguins who stage an Avalanche, the cats are spared a frontal attack by the pirates but shortly afterwards Charles is washed overboard, presumably lost for good. Oliver never gives up hope and not only is Charles rescued but the *Nine Lives* is found, the Queen's mission is completed, and seven chests of jewels are recovered. Once again the deceptive sea dogs lose.

Tim Davis successfully continues his series with this wonderfully illustrated high-interest book. Reinforce the cover on this one—it's sure to stay in circulation!

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Arlene Neal
 Teacher, Covenant School
 Granite Falls, North Carolina

Gorman, Carol. *Million Dollar Winner.* ISBN 0570046300.

—*The Rumor.* ISBN 0570046319.

Edited by Koehler. (I Witness ; 4). Concordia Publishing House, 1994. Paperbound, \$4.99. Gr. 3 - 5.

Adam Wheaton and Ross are best friends in fifth grade. They don't try to compete with each other, they just have fun. Adam lives with his mother, who is a divorcee, and she earns their living. They manage quite frugally and when Adam's mom wins a million dollar lottery, life drastically changes for them.

The Wheatons won't receive all the money at one time, but will be paid over twenty years time, after taxes are deducted. So Mrs. Wheaton will

continue working, but she does hope to buy a small house for her and Adam.

Classmates of Adam are affected, too. Suddenly, he is very much in demand and is invited to a popular, but obnoxious girl's party. He is chosen first to be on a gym team, even though his average athletic skills haven't changed. A couple of teachers make snide and hurtful remarks overheard by Adam and Ross.

Carol Gorman emphasizes the importance of loyalty of friends, families sticking by each other and the hurts caused by people who are jealous. Spiritual themes of praying for the ones who wrong you and forgiving those who we can't change, give a good solid Christian foundation to the reader.

The Rumor.

Samantha is new in town and is anxious to make new friends in fifth grade. She tells Abby, a school chum, about a game called The Telephone Game. This is where you start a message around a circle of people, and wait to see how it changes by the time it gets to the last person.

Abby grabs on to the idea of this game and proposes starting a rumor about someone in their class to see how it changes and grows. Though the rumor is not malicious, both girls have no idea how quickly the rumor gets out of control and of the hurt it can cause.

It is not necessary for these two I Witness books to be read in any particular sequence. Christian values and the importance of not passing on rumors are emphasized.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 4

Barbara Goy Taenzler
 Freelance Writer and Book Reviewer
 Greenwood, Iowa

Hammer, Loretta Johnson and Gail Langer Karwoski. *The Tree That Owns Itself and Other Adventure Tales from out of the Past.* Peachtree Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1561451207. Paperbound, \$8.95. Gr. 4 - 8.

This book is made up of twelve historical tales which happened in the state of Georgia, tales of people, places, and even animals. Sometimes the authors have added some information which is fictional and which makes the story more interesting, but almost every story is based in fact. The stories involve topics as diverse as Max, the mascot of a Parachute Infantry Regiment at Fort Benning, Georgia who parachuted with the men in the United States armed forces during World War II; and Mary Hart, the wife of Benjamin Hart, a patriot who fought for independence from England. Mrs. Hart played a major role in the Revolutionary War in 1780. She is the only woman to have a Georgia county named after her. She was very clever and brave to plot against the Tories and send messages to her husband and the other

patriots to come to her aid. And the Tories never figured out what she was doing.

This would be a wonderful history book for homeschoolers. Many of the stories have messages of faith and courage. Both boys and girls will enjoy the adventuresome stories.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Helen Hunter
Freelance Writer
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

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Hansen, Joyce. *The Captive*. Scholastic, 1994. ISBN 0590416251. Hardbound, \$13.95. Gr. 4 - 7.

The Ashanti Kingdom, West Africa, 1788. Beloved member of a famous tribe, an honorable clan, a loving family, twelve-year-old Kofi, son of a Great Chief, happily faces his most wonderful day—until a group of African and white slave traders kidnap him. Overwhelming horror brings a nightmare from which Kofi cannot escape. He is “The Captive.” Kofi loses

his brother and then Ama, the little slave girl who tries to help him. Only his flute and his rich heritage remains with him. The brutal trek to the African coast, the barbarity, sickness, and degradation on the ship drive the gently reared Kofi to despair. Aboard the ship he forms strong friendships with the white indentured servant Tim and the Captain’s own black slave Joseph. All three boys are illegally sold to a Massachusetts farmer. With the help of his two friends, comforted by his flute, Kofi learns about his new life and the indignities of slavery in a fantastic new world. Beatings, insults, and overwork drive the boys into running away, into a wonderful new life with the African/American, Quaker ship builder Captain Paul Cuffe.

Depicting the taking of the slaves, the horrors of transportation, and the sale of these wretches, *The Captive* includes a lesser known slice of American history, the illegal slave trade in the New England States. The autobiography of the slave Gustavus Vassa, other true slave narratives,

and the actual, historical character Paul Cuffe were the inspiration for this novel. A recipient of the Coretta Scott King Award, author Joyce Hansen presents her protagonist, Kofi, so heart wrenchingly that she leads the reader into vividly living Kofi’s experiences beside him. Joyce Hansen presents her characters without pretense. There are good and bad among them all, whether they be black or white, pagan or Christian, slave or free. Kofi’s cold New England owner claims to be a Christian. Juxtaposed with this, the greatest help Kofi receives comes from the Christian black slave boy, Joseph, and the Quaker Captain Paul Cuffe. The last chapter ends with promised freedom for Kofi. This is tantalizingly followed by an epilogue introducing a free, adult Kofi. Will the author let us know what happened during those blank years? *The Captive* makes an interesting book to read in company with Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and Paula Fox’s *Slave Dancer*.

u Quality -5 § Acceptability-5

Donna Eggett
Freelance Writer
Maiden, North Carolina

Howard, Milly. *Brave the Wild Trail*. Illustrated by Tom Halverson. Bob Jones University Press, 1987. ISBN 0890843848. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 4 - 7.

We do not hear much about the “wild west” of the southeastern United States or the days after the Civil War. Families had to find ways to survive against unbelievable odds with no communities to support them. For Josh and his family, life was very hard. As the only child of the poor Bramlett family, Josh dreamed of owning a dog. If only he could have this canine companion, maybe he could stand the loneliness. His father dreams other dreams. He sees the wild cattle wandering in the wilderness and decides to round them up and drive them slowly to the seaport. The money from the sale of the cattle will improve their lifestyle and sustain them for a long time. However, where can he find men to help? How will the family live on the cattle drive?

On the way back from town, the dog that Josh has been dreaming of appears from nowhere! But, before he can claim him, the dog leads them to his rightful owner, hiding in the trees. Willie Tiger, an orphaned Seminole Indian boy, is desperately trying to help his grandfather overcome a virus. The Bramletts befriend the helpless man and tend to his illness. Willie Tiger is wary of the white family and dares not trust them. As they share their food and home with them, they learn his story and decide to help him get back with other relatives. The grandfather, though weak, agrees to accompany them on the cattle drive as transportation to his relatives. Willie Tiger and Arcadie, an unsavory character, join as hands and the adventure begins.

Riveting adventure, mystery, and suspense fill each page. As a reader of modern biographies, I have rarely read a “western” that could hold my interest. This book kept me on the edge of my seat for hours and I couldn’t wait to find out what was coming next. The sequence of events is very believable and fun to read. The reader is easily able to relate to the feelings of the characters. As Josh asks hard questions, his father’s firm faith in God shines in his answers as well as his daily living. And Josh learns that faith in God is not just something to talk about but a way of life.

Middle school reluctant readers as well as intermediate boys will enjoy the adventure and mystery in *Brave the Wild Trail*. They will surely be asking for more titles from Milly Howard.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Sharon Ann Rau
Librarian, Valley Christian Schools
Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada

Howard, Milly. *Captive Treasure*. Illustrated by Cheryl L. Weikel. Bob Jones University Press, 1988. ISBN 0890844402. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 4 - 6.

Carrie has reason to be excited. Her adventure starts with a ride on a paddle wheeler to the big city of St. Joseph where the streets are full of prairie schooners, buckboards, and freight wagons. There she and her family stock up with supplies for the journey west. Carrie’s responsibility for the trip is to care of the family Bible. A special pocket is sewn on the inside of the covered wagon canvas to hold it.

Shortly after their journey begins, Carrie is taken captive by the Cheyennes. The only thing she has with her to link her to her family is the Bible. Carrie decides to read it every day just as her preacher father did. Soon she begins learning the language of her abductors. As her language skills increase she begins telling Bible stories to the Indian children. The Indians have decided that the Bible is “good medicine” and Carrie must teach them the difference between their Great Spirit and God.

Milly Howard has combined historical fiction with a study in sharing one’s faith. Even young Carrie can give the Gospel message in a way that leads others to Christ. But not everyone in camp wants to hear the message. And not all those willing to hear will accept.

Captive Treasure rings true to its time period and the Indian culture. Black and white pencil drawings add to the pleasure of the book. The large print makes for easy reading.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Myrtle May Pittman Crane
Freelance Writer
Alderwood Manor, Washington

Howard, Milly. *The Runaway Princess.* Illustrated by Del Thompson. Bob Jones University Press, 1988. ISBN 0890844658. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 3 - 6.

In the castle courtyard the noises of musicians, jugglers, and acrobats distract anyone from noticing Princess Brenna as she slips away into the forest. A prisoner for many years of her greedy uncle, Brenna hopes that her disguise as a servant girl will ensure her freedom. With the help of an old man named Quintag and a juggler boy named Rino, the princess must decide whether to take on the responsibilities that are hers by birth and God's design.

A publisher's note refers to the many times in history that individuals were either killed or imprisoned, leaving another to rule. The tale begins many years after her father has been killed in battle and her mother in a suspicious accident. Brenna's story will appeal especially to children who enjoy fairy tales. Along with castles, dukes and princes, the exciting plot includes galloping horse rides, lots of disguises, and a bit of suspense.

The few black and white sketches add little to the plot, but the full-color picture of Brenna on the cover provides appeal. While entertaining, the story's impact centers on Brenna's discovery that the true meaning of freedom is a yielding of her life to the Lord.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Cathy Bittner
Librarian, Cascade Christian School
Tacoma, Washington

Jerman, Jerry. *Phantom of the Pueblo.* (The Journeys of Jessie Land; 3). Victor Books, 1995. ISBN 1564764664. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 2 - 8.

Book three in the Journeys of Jessie Land series involves Jessie and her "almost brother" Leo Little Wolf in a dangerous chase for Spanish silver. Jessie and Leo have been invited to join their adult friend, Hazel Womack, for a camping trip on Hazel's land in Arizona. The year is 1935. When they set out to explore an Indian pueblo, they discover the first in a series of mysterious events. A hole in one of the ancient walls has recently been opened up and then patched with fresh clay. When Jessie and her friends dig through the fresh clay they discover a chest inside filled with artifacts from Spanish explorers.

But Jessie and the others aren't the only ones interested in this treasure. A hostile neighbor is determined to have the chest and its treasures for himself. Complicating their search are rumors of a phantom at the pueblo. A "phantom" that Jessie, herself, hears playing a faint tune in the night.

Jerry Berman has packed nonstop mysteries and close calls in this volume. Jessie and Leo find

themselves in one crisis after another including racing to save Hazel when her small plane crashes, being chased by the neighbor, Cal Maddox, and tied up in an abandoned mine, surviving a cave-in and digging their way out, finding Hazel again and being shot at by Cal, and finally racing across the fragile roofs of the pueblo to escape the crazed man. Added to the adventures are Jessie's faith in God as she turns to him with each new crisis and sees his answers to her prayers.

The book does seem to have a problem with abrupt story changes and only brief, sometimes unsatisfactory, explanations. But despite this, the story is full of action and interesting situations, such as a camel ride through depression-era Arizona.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Donna Brown
Church Librarian
Portland, Oregon

Johnson, Lois Walfrid. *The Creeping Shadows.* (Adventures of the Northwoods; 3). Bethany House Publishers, 1990. ISBN 1556611021. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 2 - 6.

The Creeping Shadows is Lois Walfrid Johnson's third book in the Adventures in the Northwoods series. Mysteries seem to follow twelve-year-old Kate O'Connell. It is the winter of 1906 in Wisconsin, and Kate's step-father must return to the logging camp and leave his family to care for the farm alone during the hard winter. Kate's family is not the only one having a hard time. Her friend's family is going to be evicted from their farm if they can't come up with the mortgage payment.

This story is about getting a second chance to prove oneself and the difficult process of living down a bad reputation. When things begin to disappear in the Swenson house, the natural person to blame is Stretch, who needs to get his life straightened out. Kate has other things to worry about. Her brother Anders thinks she's not being responsible in taking care of his horse, Wildfire. When the horse comes up lame and the oats box is left open, Stretch seems to be the logical person to blame again.

The author tells the hardships of farming in the early 1900's in a way that makes history come alive for children. Kate learns how to milk a cow and care for a horse. She also knows the terror of watching wolves creep up on the flock of sheep. Interesting characters and local color move the story along.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Myrtlemary Pittman Crane
Freelance Writer, Editor
Alderwood Manor, Washington

Kerley, Barbara. *Songs of Papa's Island.* Illustrated by Katherine Tillotson. Houghton Mifflin, 1995. ISBN 0395715482. Hardbound, \$14.95. K - Gr. 4.

Though still in the womb, she was there. Though a tiny tot, she was there. But, she doesn't remember. Helping this little one experience the "simple things" of a tropical island where she once lived, Kerley weaves interesting tales of life. The story is told through a little girl's perspective as her mother helps her "see" the island in her *Songs of Papa's Island*.

The enchantment of the Pacific island comes alive with stories of geckos and frogs, swimming among the tropical fish, and feeling the balmy tropic. As time passes from conception to toddlerhood, the little girl learns what it was like on "Papa's Island." Moreover, her mother's stories help her and the reader alike feel, smell, and experience the island and its peculiarities.

This unique approach to experiencing the tropical island world is delightful. The parallel tracks of the baby's and the mother's experiences strengthen the enchantment and multiply the lessons learned. Though, at times, the text is a bit difficult to follow because of the first person storytelling approach, the book is nevertheless a captivating and educational piece of literature.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Susan Adlerley
International Ministries, ACSI
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Kline, Suzy. *Song Lee and the Leech Man.* Illustrated by Frank Remkiewicz. Viking, 1995. ISBN 067085848X. Hardbound, \$11.99. Gr. 2 - 5.

Written for seven to ten-year-olds, this fifty-three page chapter book is perfect for those readers leaving the "I can read" books and moving on to their first chapter books. Ten-year-olds may find the story a little young, because of the age and behavior of the main characters. Younger readers will be attracted by the leeches and insects. On a field trip to the University pond, students in Room 2B learn about insects, leeches, and getting along. Song Lee, a "peacemaker," saves the day by getting rid of the leeches; through her the boys learn something about being a friend and working together.

A strong lead draws the reader into an intriguing story in the first chapter. Dialogue between characters moves the story well. The second chapter slows down enough to allow readers to get to know the characters better. Lack of transition between chapters may be a strength, rather than a weakness, at this level of reading. *Song Lee and the Leech Man* is illustrated with occasional pen-and-ink type sketches. The art doesn't distract from the text, but doesn't seem to enhance it either. Research is well used, with acknowledgment given at the beginning of the

book. Facts are not overwhelming, but rather a natural part of the dialogue.

This fast paced story with true-to-life characters is a welcome addition to available reading material for advancing young readers.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Tracie Mabry
Freelance Writer
Vancouver, Washington

Lasky, Kathryn. *She's Wearing a Dead Bird on Her Head!* Illustrated by David Catrow. Hyperion Books for Children, 1995. ISBN 0786800658. Hardbound, \$14.95. Gr. 3 - 6.

When two fashionable Boston ladies became serious about a project, the Audubon Society is founded. Harriet Hemmenway, appalled by the bird feathers she observed on women's hats, enlisted the help of her cousin, Minna. Not only did they encourage preservation of birds, but they also influenced the movement which would give women the right to vote.

She's Wearing a Dead Bird on Her Head by Kathryn Lasky describes in a very dramatic way the origin of a well-known conservation organization. David Catrow has delightfully illustrated this book with exotic hats and birds, and even a cat who playfully considers the many birds.

Younger children will enjoy the flamboyant illustrations while older readers will learn many facts of early attempts at bird protection and conservation efforts in the United States.

The author's note at the end of the book has a concise history of the people and events of this story.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Marie Knaupp
Retired Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

Lowell, Susan. *The Boy with Paper Wings.* Illustrated by Paul Mirocha. Milkweed Editions, 1995. ISBN 1571316051. Hardbound, \$14.95. ISBN 1571316043. Paperbound, \$6.95. Gr. 4 - 7.

Eleven-year-old Paul has been put to bed with a viral fever. Told by his parents to rest and get well, Paul begins to fold paper into airplanes and take imaginary trips.

Paul's journeys include G.I. Joe and Barbie who are on the floor of his closet amongst his army games, and the fearful KRON, whose army of braindrainers are seeking to catch Paul and drain his brains away.

Paul is resourceful and able to turn his paper creations into animals, birds, and airplanes which aid him in his times of need. The dialog is simple and straightforward. One creative addition to the

book are the patterns and descriptions for paper folding.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 4

Helen Hunter
Author/Freelance Writer
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Mahy, Margaret. *Tingleberries, Tuckertubs and Telephones : A Tale of Love and Ice-Cream.* Illustrated by Robert Staermose. Viking, 1995. ISBN 0670863319. Hardbound, \$12.99. Gr. 3 - 6.

Join shy Saracen who lives in Porridge Bay, on Breakfast Island. Just come through the Marmalade Heads, past Burnt Toast Rocks. Be ready to face modern pirates who menacingly sing, "Fifteen men on a red cell phone! Yo! Ho! Ho!"

Saracen Hobday lives with Granny, a former detective inspector, and is so timid that he hides in a tree whenever a boat brings supplies to his small island. This all changes when Granny is called to pursue the dangerous pirate chief Grudge-Gallows, leaving Saracen to face danger alone.

Tingleberries, Tuckertubs and Telephones is a hilarious story full of outrageous characters and silly situations. Mahy's clever use of language enlivens the plot, ensuring entertainment as readers enjoy Saracen's maturing from "a limp lettuce leaf" to "a crisp cucumber in the great salad of life."

The story is enhanced by simple black and white sketches, and a colorful jacket illustration of the pirate chief with his pink cell phone. This is an entertaining comedy that does have a message. Saracen learns that "you can be shy and brave at the same time."

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Cathy Bitmer
Librarian, Cascade Christian School
Tacoma, Washington

Mahy, Margaret. *Clancy's Cabin.* Illustrated by Barbara Steadman. The Overlook Press, 1995. ISBN 0879515929. Hardbound, \$14.95. Gr. 3 - 6.

What a winning combination! A camping trip and a treasure hunt! *Clancy's Cabin* has both. Three of the Harrington children are given a surprise by their parents after their family of six grows to eight with the addition of newborn twin boys. Because the parents will be so busy caring for the new babies, Mr. Harrington plans a camping outing for the elder three children. Skip is eleven, Marina is ten, and Timothy is eight. They are shown the surprise destination by their father.

He has cleaned, painted, and furnished a little, old cabin on Clancy O'Reagan's land, a neighbor

and childhood friend of the Harringtons in New Zealand. It holds great sentimental value for him as it is one where he spent happy summers when he was a child.

The children are so excited about their week of camping and being on their own. Mr. and Mrs. O'Reagan live close to the cabin and the children are to call their parents each evening from the O'Reagan's. Each day is filled with new activities and adventures. A stray dog befriends the children, they take daily hikes to explore the area, and they cook their meals over a campfire from groceries their parents provided.

The best surprise is Skip's discovery of an antiquated treasure map up in the eaves of the cabin. Although the map is written in code, they follow the mysterious clues and what they discover is highly rewarding.

Margaret Mahy has written a grand family book which is sure to enchant children. Illustrations by Barbara Steadman follow the tale closely and add to the intriguing mental images.

The children's characters are skillfully crafted, allowing the reader to imagine real people. Sibling rivalry, their differences, and their loyalty are all plausible traits. Nicely done.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Barbara Goy Taenzler
Freelance Writer and Book Reviewer
Glenwood, Iowa

Marino, Jan. *The Mona Lisa of Salem Street.* Little, Brown, 1995. ISBN 0316546143. Hardbound, \$14.95. Gr. 4 - 7.

Orphans, Nettie and John Peter, are used to being sent from one relative to the next. They know in time they will only be returned to harsh Grandma Bessie, although the children can't stand the thought of going back. But for now, they are off to live with their paternal grandfather. John Peter eagerly embraces the man, gains confidence, and no longer even stutters. Nettie, however, refuses to accept or love the grandfather. She's sure he will only send them back to Grandma Bessie. *The Mona Lisa of Salem Street* is Nettie's story of acceptance and the ability to love again.

Author Jan Marino has written a compelling story of a family making a first start together. While John Peter and Nettie gain strength, the grandfather regains a life he had let slip away with the death of his wife. Not only do the main characters impact one another, but even neighbors grow and benefit from their struggles. Through Nettie's trial, an agoraphobic neighbor gathers the necessary confidence to leave her home.

The Mona Lisa of Salem Street is a mixture of positive and negative religious examples. The characters pray, but they also use God's and Christ's name in vain. Additional profanity is included in the story. One reference to corporate

worship is negatively drawn, but by the book's conclusion, Nettie has a positive experience in a church building. However, Marino leads the reader to believe Nettie has communicated in a vague way with her deceased parents.

These concerns are in the midst of a good story. Further discussion and analysis with an 8 - 12 year old reader would be helpful.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 2

Lorie Ann Grover
Freelance Writer
Kent, Washington

Jean of solving mysteries. Scruggs, for good reason, befriends Jean and encourages Penny and Jack to also accept her and allow her full participation in their activities.

The plot thickens when, during a late night game of flashlight tag, the kids unearth old boxes and kegs which are filled with money. In the midst of serious danger, Jean comes to the rescue. The story has a good plot and moves ahead quickly. The facts about raising llamas and learning about some of their behaviors makes the book even more interesting.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Helen Hunter
Author/Freelance Writer
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

McCully, Emily Arnold. *The Bobbin Girl*. Dial Books for Young Readers, 1996. ISBN 0803718284. Hardbound, \$14.99. Gr. 3 - 6.

Though Rebecca is only ten years old, she reports to work as a "bobbin girl" at 4:30 a.m. at the cotton mill. Her job is to remove full bobbins of yarn from spinning frames and replace them with empty ones. The manual labor is done by women and young girls, while the men are overseers. The working environment is harsh. Hot, humid air with no ventilation creates a breeding ground for lung diseases which often sweep through the mill. Though it is against regulations, during spare moments the mill girls try to read or do math to improve their minds. The long work day ends thirteen and a half hours later.

One day the news is spread that wages are to be lowered. Judith, a very spirited woman and one whom Rebecca looks up to, is instrumental in banding the women together to refuse to work until wages and working conditions are improved. But the mill owners refuse to give in to the demands and slowly the women return to work because the little money they do get is sorely needed. Though Rebecca has to bid Judith goodbye since she refuses to give up, she tells Rebecca to not give up hope and to continue to stand up for what is right.

The Bobbin Girl with its full page watercolor illustrations, is a concise and factual history about working in a textile factory during the 1800's, and how the low wages, long hours, and poor conditions precipitated the beginning of workers' strikes. The story is based on the memoirs of a mill girl during this time period. The strike, though not successful, was demonstrated peacefully, in contrast to the violence of later strikes.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Debbie Lindsay
Homeschool Parent
Eatonville, Washington

McCusker, Paul. *Danger Lies Ahead*. (Adventures in Odyssey; 7). Focus on the Family Publishing, 1995. ISBN 1561793698. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 2 - 7.

Danger Lies Ahead is book seven in the "Adventures in Odyssey" series. Jack Davis, a sixth grader, literally runs into the "new kid in town" on his first day of school. As soon as the two pick themselves up and exchange names Colin accuses Jack of stealing one of his books. Even though Jack finds Colin's words and actions baffling he also finds himself drawn into a friendship with this strange new boy. However, when Colin's secrets and the promises he extracts from Jack begin to make Jack suspicious of everyone else, Jack begins to wonder who is really doing the lying?

Author Paul McCusker has written a fast-paced adventure story that will keep readers fascinated to the last page. Dialogue and descriptions are excellent, characters are believable, and the things Jack learns about friendship and trust are a natural part of the story.

The cover art is also excellent, offering an action packed scene that draws the reader in and creates a curiosity about the story.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Donna Brown
Church Librarian
Portland, Oregon

Massi, Jeri. *Llamas on the Loose*. (Peabody Adventure Series). Bob Jones University Press, 1988. ISBN 0890844526. Paperbound, \$6.49.

The young people in the Peabody Series are from the youth group of the First Bible Church of Peabody, Wisconsin. Penny is the narrator of this story. Her side-kicks in adventure are her younger brother Jack, their even younger, and pesky little sister, Jean. Their neighbor boy, Scruggs, who has recently been adopted by Mrs. Bennett finishes out the group. Scruggs, as a new Christian, is the only one of the group who wants to share his faith. He does a great job and even Penny and Jack notice and wish they could be more comfortable in talking about God.

Doc Ericson and his wife, old friends of the family, have bought an island on Winneca Lake. There they have begun a llama herd—forty of them—and need some summer farmhands to help them with fences, clearing debris, and training the llamas to pull a sulky. All of the kids hire on for weekends.

Their time at Winneca Farms is filled with hard work, emergencies when a pack of dogs attacks the herd and kills some of the baby llamas, and mystery when they discover a telescope in a window across the lake trained on the island. Penny and Jack, who resent having their little sister tagging along, aren't quite as capable as

McCusker, Paul. *Point of No Return*. (Adventures in Odyssey ; 8). Focus on the Family Publishing, 1995. ISBN 1561794015. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 4 - 6.

It starts with a cigar and a ten-year-old boy. In *Point of No Return*, Jimmy Barclay knew he shouldn't try to smoke, but his best friend Tony is always able to persuade him, and trouble results. While Jimmy hangs out over the toilet bowl, Tony is in his room, belting out forbidden rock music. Then Mom and Dad come home, and Jimmy is on restriction again, this time maybe for life. Jimmy searches his conscience for someone other than himself to blame for his troubles, but admits to his mom it is he who is choosing to do wrong. Jimmy promises to reform.

Meanwhile, the kids' pastor and his son Jacob from the church come over to ask Jimmy to the church youth club meeting. They challenge him to a basketball game of one on one; if Jacob wins, Jimmy has to come to church that night. Of course, Jacob wins, and Jimmy struggles unsuccessfully to find a way to break his promise. He goes and hears again that Jesus died just for him. This time it has meaning for Jimmy and he gives his life to Christ. Then his troubles really start. His Christian grandmother dies of cancer; his best friend Tony ridicules and mocks him, his helpful pastor and Jacob move. Jimmy feels alone, until he realizes that Jesus understands and is always there to help and guide.

This fast-paced adventure by Paul McCusker is a fun, easy read, and could be used successfully as a read-aloud. Its 125 pages contain lots of spiritual guidance, but it's never preachy. McCusker includes realistic details, such as the fun games at the youth meeting and the firecracker explosion in the park, to which the older elementary reader can easily relate. The book cover of two boys racing away from the explosion in the park's gazebo is eye-catching and colorful.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Lynn Harding
Librarian, Snohomish County Christian School
Lynnwood, Washington

McFarlane, Sheryl. *Jessie's Island*. Illustrated by Sheena Lott. Orca Book Publishers, 1992. ISBN 0920501761. Paperbound, \$6.95. K - Gr. 6.

For those who already have a love for nature, *Jessie's Island* will inspire a feeling of nostalgia and the memory of happy times of discovery. For those who like Jessie's cousin, Thomas, think life on an isolated island must be boring, this book shows and tells, page after page, exciting life and activities at each season of the year.

Two letters, one to Jessie from Thomas, and the other from Jessie back to Thomas, comprise the text of this beautifully illustrated book. Each letter describes a contrasting lifestyle, showing the interesting activities of city life and the equally, though different, activities of life in "the middle of nowhere."

The binding and cover of the book will limit its use for a library, but the high interest level will cause it to be read over and over again.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Marie Knaupp
Retired Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

McFarlane, Sheryl. *Going to the Fair*. Illustrated by Sheena Lott. Orca Book Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1551430622. Paperbound, \$7.95. Gr. 3 - 6.

Sheryl McFarlane and Sheena Lott team up in their description of one long day at the fair. Sights, sounds, and smells are vividly portrayed in the experience of reading *Going to the Fair*.

Erin has entered her prize pumpkin, so the day also holds the anticipation as well as excitement of receiving a ribbon at the fair. Since the ribbon she receives is for third prize, the book ends with dreams of next year's prize-winning pumpkin. *Going to the Fair* will give a touch of nostalgia for all who have anticipated and received prizes at a fair. For others this can be a new and enjoyable experience.

By showing many activities and exhibits, the illustrations compliment the text to give quite a complete picture of a small community fair. Children will enjoy this book and many adults will be able to add experiences of their own when the story is finished. This book could be a valuable tool to introduce sharing time with students in school.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Marie Knaupp
Retired Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

Myers, Walter Dean. *Smiffy Blue, Ace Crime Detective : The Case of the Missing Ruby and Other Stories*. Illustrated by David J. A. Sims. Scholastic, 1996. ISBN 0590676652. Hardbound, \$14.95. Gr. 3 - 5.

Smiffy Blue, Ace Crime Detective by Walter Dean Myers is actually four short stories written about Smiffy Blue, Doober City's blundering yet successful detective, his sidekick, Jeremy Joe, and, of course, his faithful dog, Dog. These are humorous cases in which Smiffy goes from one improbable clue to another, always amazing Jeremy Joe, and always nabbing the culprit.

Smiffy Blue is entertaining, although rather predictable, after reading several of the stories. Yet this very predictability may be quite appealing to the young readers to whom it is aimed. The book is filled with cartoon illustrations of Smiffy and the other characters and this adds greatly to its appeal. The illustrations and cover demonstrate clearly that the characters are Afro-Americans. Each individual story also contains a visual clue for amateur sleuths who wish to try their hand at solving the case before Smiffy Blue does.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Cecil Carey
Middle School Librarian
Plano, Illinois

Napoli, Donna Jo. *Jimmy, the Pickpocket of the Palace*. Illustrated by Judith Byron Schachner. Dutton Children's Books, c1995. ISBN 0525453571. Hardbound, \$14.99. Gr. 4 - 6 (Also, for older reluctant readers in middle school).

Donna Jo Napoli has written an interesting take-off on an old fairy tale scenario in her book, *Jimmy, the Pickpocket of the Palace*. Beginning as it does with the young frog, Jimmy, yet unknissed by the princess, the story gets off to a rather slow start. But action picks up when Jimmy finds himself a human, yet with some frog-like characteristics and emotions.

Adventure and humorous situations abound while this frog-boy searches for the kindly Prince who seems to have all the answers. In his search, he's led to his lost father, Pin—a man at heart.

Jimmy's personality goes through many changes as he becomes first a young boy then later returns to his former (and much preferred state) of a frog. His character is basically good but he matures and learns much of the world in his adventures, particularly as he discovers his father's identity. And although that discovery is painful for him, he is able to accept it.

Although the subject matter of this book may sound "babyish" to middle schoolers, they most likely would find themselves drawn into the story and be entertained by it. The large print and many illustrations will also be appealing to reluctant readers.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Cecil Carey
Middle School Librarian
Plano, Illinois

Nye, Julie. *Scout*. Bob Jones University Press, 1989. ISBN 0890844135. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 1 - 8.

Seventh grader Jeff Wingate enjoys his home surrounded by the wilds along the northern shores of Lake Huron in Michigan. Out boating on a summer day Jeff finds a very seriously injured, huge Doberman lying on the shore of one of the uninhabited islands. After much effort and ingenuity he is able to get the dog into the boat, race back home, and with the help of his older brother they take the dog to the vet. Scout recovers, to the amazement of everyone, and turns out to be a very well trained dog. But in spite of newspaper ads and calls to the police, no one claims the dog.

As the summer progresses Jeff and Scout become inseparable. The dog causes quite a stir in the community with his abilities that become more evident with a runaway horse at a horsemen's competition. Suddenly a stranger in the crowd asks Jeff some very peculiar questions about Scout, and while they are driving by this same man as they leave the grounds, Scout becomes very agitated.

After a burglary incident several days later at their home which involves the police and a K-9 unit of the U.S. Special Forces Team, the dreaded day comes when Scout is claimed by the man who raised and trained Scout. Can Jeff trust God enough to do what is best for all three of them and be willing to accept the outcome?

Written in the first person, Julie Nye skillfully weaves dogs, horses, mystery, adventure, and spiritual lessons into this story, which makes it very appealing to a broad range of reading interests. The story focuses on how God uses people and circumstances in one's life to grow them into the kind of person he wants them to become. The book also contains a few simple illustrations to enhance some of the more exciting incidents.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Debbie Lindsay
Homeschool Parent
Eatonville, Washington

Nystrom, Carolyn. *Emma Says Goodbye : A Child's Guide : Bereavement.* Illustrated by Annabel Large. (The Lion Care Series). Lion Publishing, 1990. ISBN 0745929249. Paperbound, \$4.99. PS - Gr. 6.

Emma's Aunt Sue has come to live with them for the summer. Aunt Sue has cancer and she needs to live close to town for her daily chemotherapy treatments. Each day Emma watches her aunt grow weaker as the treatments take their toll. Some days all Aunt Sue has the strength to do is watch a little TV or read with Emma.

After the chemotherapy treatments are finished, Aunt Sue begins to slowly perk up as her strength and hair return, but by the end of summer her health takes a turn for the worse that even radiation therapy is unable to help.

Everyone realizes that Aunt Sue is dying. Emma wonders why God is letting her die when they have prayed daily for her health to be restored. Aunt Sue herself tries to help Emma understand that death for God's people does not end life.

A very poignant story full of colorful illustrations that takes the young reader through the steps of the fear, pain, and emotions that family members must face as they watch a loved one suffer through a serious illness that ends in death. The author addresses the question as to why God does not always give us exactly what we pray for, but that he does promise he will never leave alone those who love him. The story concludes that Aunt Sue is now tan and strong, dancing around Jesus in heaven.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Debbie Lindsay
Homeschool Parent
Eatonville, Washington

Nystrom, Carolyn. *Jenny and Grandpa : A Child's Guide : Growing Old.* Illustrated by Shirley Bellwood. (The Lion Care Series). Lion Publishing, 1994. ISBN 0745929222. Paperbound, \$4.99. Gr. 2 - 6.

Jenny and Grandpa by Carolyn Nystrom is part of the Lion Care Series and is designed to help children understand what it means to grow old. The story is made up of several sections covering different aspects of growing older. At the end of each segment a separate page is included to give more information on the subjects of retirement, loneliness, having less money to spend, and changes in the body. These sidebars are excellent teaching tools and provide opportunity for discussion.

Jenny and her grandpa are good friends. Jenny's grandpa used to build houses. Now he's retired and is building a new closet for Jenny.

"What's it like to be old?" asks Jenny.

"I'm not old," replies her grandfather, "I'm seventy-five years young." But as summer continues and Jenny helps her grandfather build the closet, he begins to tell her about his life and the things he remembers.

One afternoon as he's working on the closet he collapses from the heat. Jenny calls an emergency number and an ambulance takes her grandfather to the hospital. As she and her mother wait, Jenny asks God to take care of her grandfather. After her grandpa comes home from the hospital they talk about God's care. Grandpa shows Jenny what Isaiah 46 says about God's care from birth to old age. "Someday," he says, "God will take care of me by taking me to heaven to be with him. But not just yet."

Author Carolyn Nystrom does an excellent job of showing the friendship between Jenny and her grandfather. The characters have depth and appeal. Their conversations are true to life. The color illustrations are realistic and appear on or along side every page. The style and attention to detail in the 1930's and 40's "flashbacks," as Grandpa is telling Jenny about his life, are especially appealing. Christian principles are taught through example and reference to the Bible.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Donna Brown
Church Librarian
Portland, Oregon

Polacco, Patricia. *I Can Hear the Sun : A Modern Myth.* Philomel Books, 1996. ISBN 039922520X. Hardbound, \$15.95. Gr. 5 - Adult.

Termed a "modern myth" by the publisher, *I Can Hear the Sun* is the story of a friendship between Stephanie Michele, the keeper of animals at the Lake Merritt reserve in Oakland, California, and Fondo, a lonely young boy. Desperately needing a friend, Fondo, a homeless child from a nearby settlement house, visits the lake every day. As he begins watching a flock of geese feeding at the lake he becomes friends with Stephanie Michele and a group of homeless people who frequent the

park benches. Especially, Fondo becomes friends with a blind goose which he feeds by hand and which follows him everywhere. The goose and boy become so attached to each other that Mae Marie, who lives out of a shopping cart, predicts, "Pretty soon, you're gonna turn into a goose!" As Fondo watches a flock of geese take to the sky he says wistfully, "We all could fly once...We just forgot how. If we'd think hard enough, we'd remember." Fondo then determines that when the geese leave the lake for the winter he will fly away with them. The story climaxes as Fondo escapes from the settlement authorities who have determined to send him to a place for special needs children, and indeed meets the geese at the lake's edge and flies away with them.

I Can Hear the Sun is a complicated story which should not be taken lightly. While we can usually recommend Patricia Polacco's books with no reservation, it is with a strong note of caution that we are reviewing this selection. Librarians, teachers, and parents should read this one critically before deciding whether or not to purchase it for their young readers. We have some reservations about the seeming disrespect for authority which is projected when Fondo eludes the authorities and his friends in the park support his "flying away." Of concern also is the idea that if we believe something hard enough, we can do it. We have no reservations about Patricia Polacco's beautiful illustrations which reflect her continuing high standard for artistry.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 1

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

Repp, Gloria. *A Question of Yams.* Illustrated by Roger Bruckner. Bob Jones University Press, 1992. ISBN 0890846146. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 1 - 6.

A Question of Yams is based on the true story of a man in Papua, New Guinea who defied the spirit worshipping traditions of his tribe and entrusted his life to the God of the Bible. The boy Kuri carefully watches the events that unfold in his village as his father, a Christian man, chooses to plant his yams without praying to the village spirits. Although the Head Men of the village predict that the yams will not grow and the family will starve, Kuri's father maintains his trust in God and will pray only to Jesus Christ.

Author Gloria Repp tells the story of God's answers to the prayers of Kuri's family, and highlights the work of missionaries who translate the Word of God into tribal languages.

Black and white sketches illustrate the story. The publishers note at the beginning is an additional help, giving background information and emphasizing God's power and character. Kuri's story will help children understand how people's

lives are changed when they can read God's Word in their own language.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Donna Brown
Church Librarian
Portland, Oregon

Ringgold, Faith. *Bonjour, Lonnie*. Hyperion Books for Children, 1996. ISBN 0786800763. Hardbound, \$15.95. Gr. 2 - 6.

One night, a strange thing happens for a young boy named Lonnie, when he hears the song of a Love Bird through his window. Before he can open the window to listen, the bird flies in and lands on his finger, then begins speaking to him in French. Lonnie is an orphan, but knows of a legend which says that a Love Bird can help you find your loved ones, and so he requests the bird's help. Then the bird disappears, and Lonnie pushes his face to the window to find it, only to discover that he is now standing outside, in the streets of early 19th century Paris.

Thus begins Faith Ringgold's *Bonjour, Lonnie*, which uses an Alice Through the Looking Glass type of theme to introduce children to some of the events in American history. As Lonnie follows the Love Bird, he is introduced to his grandfather, whom he discovers was black. Ringgold then traces the history of the 369th infantry, an all-black division of the United States army in W.W.I, and uses the grandfather character to explore the sometimes volatile issues of racial inequality and interracial marriage. *Bonjour, Lonnie* also gives readers a brief introduction to the language and culture of France, as well as a brief account of the black renaissance movement, which took place in Harlem right after W.W.I. Ringgold then traces the time line to W.W.II, where we learn that Lonnie's mother was a Jew. Here readers are introduced to The Holocaust, and we discover how Lonnie became an orphan.

Bonjour, Lonnie, which was illustrated by the author, combines a complex story line with childlike, folksy imagery, in a way that is intimate and sensitive. One almost gets the feeling that they are peering into a family's photo album, learning about the details of Lonnie's ancestry at the same time he is learning. While the story covers a broad expanse of history, Ringgold's careful relating of world events to Lonnie's personal family roots helps keep those events in focus. This is truly a unique work.

For those who are looking for a way to help children show more sensitivity to people of mixed ancestry, this book may provide a good starting point.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 4

Virginia Schnabel
Freelance Writer
Shelton, Washington

Russell, Ching Yeung. *Water Ghost*. Illustrated by Ching Zhong-Yuan Zhang. Boyds Mills Press, 1995. ISBN 1563974134. Hardbound, \$14.95. Gr. 3 - 8.

Ten-year-old Ying is excited about the possibility of going on her first overnight school camping trip. Only two obstacles stand in her way: money and her grandmother. As her guardian, Ying's grandmother is reticent to allow Ying to go camping, it's for boys only, she says. But Ying convinces her grandmother to give her a chance to earn her way.

Ying learns to make fences, which she eventually sells at the marketplace. In between times, Ying gets accused of stealing a fellow classmate's money, until a little crippled girl is found to be the culprit. Guilt rises deeply in Ying, for she never talked to Cripple Yip. Now Cripple Yip is forced out of school and drowns a few days later. To make restitution, Ying tries to communicate with Cripple Yip's grandmother and buys a half-dead chicken from the old woman with her earnings from the fences she has sold. Ying's family is furious with her until a kindly teacher gives Ying a lesson in understanding and helps those around Ying to see her kindness.

This book causes several concerns. Throughout the text, Ying's grandmother teaches her the superstitions of her religion and acts in irrational ways. When Ying does the right thing, her grandmother does not applaud her, rather, she scolds and punishes Ying. As a concerned parent, I would consider sharing this book with my children only if I read it with them and helped explain the philosophical differences.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 3

Michele Howe
Freelance Writer and Homeschool Mother
LaSalle, Michigan

Rylant, Cynthia. *Gooseberry Park*. Illustrated by Arthur Howard. Harcourt Brace, 1995. ISBN 0152322426. Hardbound, \$15.00. Gr. 4 - 9.

Stumpy, a little red squirrel, makes a new nest in a pin oak tree in Gooseberry Park, rearranging all her treasures to make room for her growing family. Her old friends who live with retired Professor Albert—Kona, the loyal Labrador retriever, and Gwendolyn, the wise hermit crab in a fishbowl—talk excitedly about the imminent birth of Stumpy's babies. Even Murray, a comical bat who introduces himself to Stumpy the first night in her new home (as he chomps on a Mars bar), shares Stumpy's enthusiasm.

Three beautiful babies fill Stumpy's waiting nest. Murray brings egg rolls (one of his favorite foods), and Kona visits daily. Suddenly a late spring storm freezes Gooseberry Park. Trees crack and crash to the ground under the weight of ice. Kona rescues Stumpy's babies from her fallen home, carrying them to the warmth of Professor Albert's basement. But no one can find

Stumpy. Kona nearly gives up hope of finding her after several treacherous trips across the ice to the park, injuring himself in the search for his friend.

Stumpy's friends converge at the Professor's house and devise a scheme to bring Stumpy back to her babies. Gwendolyn gives advice, Murray eats everything in sight and watches his favorite TV programs, and Kona works out a deal with a weasel. The plan succeeds. Stumpy, reunited with her children, makes a new home in the park.

Children will enjoy the special friendships developed in the story among an unusual assortment of animal characters. Murray's antics fill the book with laughable humor. Readers will find familiar brand names—Oreos, Walkman—and TV programs—Hard Copy, Jeopardy, Days of Our Lives. They will learn interesting facts about animals: how slowly an owl turns his head, that each giraffe's markings are unique, and that Labradors can endure very cold temperatures and extreme pain.

The author sensitively shows a mother's nesting instincts and prenatal excitement, the sacredness of birth, and the responsibilities, hard work, and fatigue of young motherhood.

Gwendolyn supposes that she was a sheep or a hawk in a previous life and has been reincarnated seventeen times. At one point in the story she reads everyone's palms.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Rhonda Marie Lackey
Freelance Writer, Retired Teacher/Librarian
Tukwila, Washington

Schur, Maxine Rose. *When I Left My Village*. Illustrated by Brian Pinkney. Dial Books for Young Readers, 1996. ISBN 0803715625. Hardbound, \$14.99. Gr. 4 - 8.

Following years of persecution and famine, thousands of Beta Israel people from the high mountains of Ethiopia are air-lifted to begin a new life in Israel. In the book *When I Left My Village* Maxine Rose Schur describes the difficult journey of one family as they walk alone for many days, then escape guards as they cross the border into Sudan. After weeks of waiting in a refugee camp, the family is finally included in a secret air-lift and they set their feet on Israeli soil.

Menelick and his family feel they are in paradise now as they receive a clean hut, plenty of good food, and the opportunity to attend school all day. The events of this story are true to the actual history of Jewish people in Ethiopia making this book an excellent resource when studying these countries.

A moving story with fabulous black and white illustrations portrays the varied feelings of Menelick and Semba, his brother, as their father and mother courageously guide, protect, and encourage them through fear and despair to final

joy and fulfillment. This is an inspiring story of faithfulness and hope receiving its reward.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Marie Knaupp
Retired Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

Schwartz, Ellen. *Starshine on TV.* Polestar Book Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1896095135. Paperbound, \$5.95. Gr. 3 - 6.

Starshine Shapiro wants to have her parent's attention and love, to be on television, and to create an environmentally correct spider web grocery bag using her Nephila spider Goldy-legs. In *Starshine on TV* by Ellen Schwartz, Starshine feels that she is losing her parents' attention to her cute and charming four-year-old sister Peggy. When fifth-grader Star wins the part of the Kitten Krunchies Girl for television commercials, she discovers her allergy to cats means little Peggy gets the job. Then she auditions to be a Munchkin in the Wizard of Oz television play, but is clumsy and her best friend Julie is chosen instead. She tries a third time for TV stardom with the Young Einstein's quiz show, but muffs all the answers.

Meanwhile, her experiments with Goldy-legs are in difficulties. After initial success testing the tensile strength of Goldy-legs' webs using tennis balls, Starshine changes the spider's diet, and the golden webs fail. In tears she talks out her feelings of inferiority, frustration, and jealousy with her parents. Her emotions calm as her artistically-talented mom explains she felt exactly the same about her little sister. Together, Starshine and her mom mix up a recipe of super high energy nutrition bars, but an accident throws Goldy-legs' maggots into the batter. Of course the spider thrives on the nutritious, dipped maggots, and spins a web that supports sixteen golf balls! Starshine's success is compounded when she catches a burglar next door by spreading golf balls on the steps and then tying his hands with the web. She is interviewed on the TV nightly news! Starshine achieves all three of her goals.

Ellen Schwartz writes a fast moving, entertaining, very readable book with an appealing heroine who faces realistic twelve-year-old problems. Her interaction with her parents is spontaneous and joyful. The creative use of language and dialogue helps speed the reader to the surprise conclusion. There are no problems with slang, however; Starlight's mom uses profanity three times on one page when the maggots fall into the cookie dough. This book will grab the reader's attention from the first page.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 4

Lynn Harding
Librarian, Snohomish County Christian School
Lynnwood, Washington

Thoene, Jake and Luke. *Legend of the Desert Bigfoot.* (The Last Chance Detectives ; 2). Tyndale House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 0842320849. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 3 - 7.

Teenagers Mike, Ben, Winnie, and Spence, living in the desert town of Ambrosia call themselves the "Last Chance Detectives." Always on the lookout for a mystery to explore, the four friends find one when a prospector is attacked by Bigfoot and his stash of gold, stolen. A short time later Mike and his grandfather, owner of the Last Chance Gas and Tow, are called to rescue a pick-up truck that has overturned on the highway.

While looking around the area, Mike finds a clump of coarse, dark brown hair caught in a barbed wire fence—hair from something that even the local veterinarian can't identify. Could it be from the legendary Bigfoot?

While carrying out the search, Mike rescues a dog that is suffering from neglect, but belongs to the prospector. Now he must make a hard choice about the dogs' future. Is it right to keep the stolen dog and care for him, or must Mike return him to his owner and perhaps see the dog suffer more neglect? Mike's mom and his dad's old Bible help Mike make the right decision and trust God with the outcome.

Authors Jake and Luke Thoene do an excellent job of catching and holding a reader's interest. The side story concerning the fate of the prospector's dog give readers an opportunity to think about right and wrong from a biblical perspective.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Donna Brown
Church Librarian
Portland, Oregon

Vernon, Robert. *Escape from Fire Lake.* (The Last Chance Detectives ; 3). Tyndale House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 0842320628. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 4 - 7.

Twelve-year-old Mike Fowler moved to Ambrosia with his mother after his father disappeared in a plane accident in the Middle East. They live with his grandparents. Mike sees himself solving the mystery of what happened to his dad, so he looks for mysteries to solve. He and his three friends spread out to look one day, and Mike inadvertently comes across two men who have just robbed the bank. They take him with them on their escape, and leave him to die in a desert wilderness called Fire Lake. Through a sandstorm and the return of his frightened dog, carrying the stolen mysterious figure of the winged jaguar, Mike goes on. He clings to the promise, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." By remembering his training and trusting in the Lord, he nearly makes it out and then is rescued by his friends. Thus comes the title, *Escape from Fire Lake*.

While the scenario seems a little artificial, a twelve-year-old just happens upon the robbers and checks on their take, the story is intriguing. The remembrance of Mike's father and the support and love of his friends and family is inspiring. The story is written well enough that one forgets that it was based on a screen play. The reader can easily picture what is happening: the dust storm feels gritty and one gets thirsty as Mike runs out of water. The characters seem

real: the mom worries and is upset and his friends give the rescue effort their all. The only illustration is on the front cover and is of a boy and his dog, overlaid with symbols of some of the action in the story.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Belcher
Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

Voelker, Joyce. *Dear Terry.* Bob Jones University Press, 1990. ISBN 0890845263. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 4 - 6.

I found *Dear Terry* particularly fun since Joyce, the main character in the story, moves to Cedar Rapids, Iowa (the city where I live) and attends Prairie Schools. It was fun to see two young friends get acquainted through the nearly-lost-art of letter writing. Their letters back and forth reveal their thoughts and feelings about their families. Joyce is a Christian and is bold to write about her faith and her family's involvement in their church. It was Joyce's grandmother who encouraged her to get a pen pal. She is very close to her grandmother and doesn't want to move to Iowa because she knows she may never see her Grannie again. Joyce has three older sisters and a younger brother. Joyce tells about their Christmas and the gifts they receive, and the traditions her family follows. The many mentions of prayer for Grannie are sweet and would be an encouragement for any unbeliever.

Terry is an only-child, but unlike Joyce, is privileged to get both a puppy and a horse during the writing of letters back and forth. Terry names the puppy "Muffie" which was my first clue that Terry might not be a girl. The reader can assume that Terry's mother is a Christian based on what

Terry writes about her, and because she is so ill, both Terry and "her" father begin to think about God.

As the pen pals exchange letters throughout more than a year, Terry and "her" father both trust Jesus Christ as their Savior. Terry and Joyce make plans to meet each other and their families during the summer. It becomes necessary for Terry to send a photo to Joyce and confess that he isn't a girl as Joyce has believed all along. But by this time they like one another so much that it doesn't matter to either of them.

A wonderful encouragement for young people to have pen pals and to write more than "How are you? I am fine." in their correspondence. This kind of letter writing not only acquaints young people with other family's cultures and traditions, but with the faith and trust in God that one young person openly shares with her new friend.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Helen Hunter
Freelance Writer
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Walley, Susan. *Best of Friends*. Bob Jones University Press, 1989. ISBN 0890844860. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 2 - 7.

As soon as ten-year-old Katie Crawford hears about the new girl in town, she decides that Renee would make a great new friend. Renee always seems to be the best at everything she does. She's even been on TV. When Renee chooses to spend time with Katie, it makes Katie feel very special. But Renee isn't as nice to everyone. She makes fun of Tracy because Tracy isn't as smart or athletic as some of the children. And she refuses to be around Louis who has Down's Syndrome. If Katie wants to stay friends with Renee she will have to choose between her old friends and this new one.

Susan Walley has done a good job of portraying children with handicaps and the responses of others in relation to them. She shows the struggle in Katie's life as Katie tries to do what is right and still be friends with someone who disagrees with her.

The illustrations and cover art are fair. Inside illustrations are black and white drawings. The cover is in color, but the colors seem bland and lacking in sharp contrast.

Scripture verses are used in Katie's family devotional time. The version chosen is rather stilted language for young readers but the intent of the verses is explained by the characters. These verses are used to help Katie understand and resolve some of the problems she is facing.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Donna Brown
Church Librarian
Portland, Oregon

Warner, Gertrude Chandler. *The Mystery at the Fair*. Illustrated by Charles Tang. (Boxcar Children Mysteries ; Special 6). Albert Whitman, 1996. ISBN 0807553360. Hardbound, \$13.95. Gr. 2 - 4.

Henry, Violet, Jessie, and Benny Alden live with their grandfather and his housekeeper, Mrs. McGregor. They had lived in an old boxcar after the death of their parents. Their grandfather found them and brought them to live with him. They love him very much. This episode, *The Mystery at the Fair* created by Gertrude Chandler Warner, begins with the children wanting to buy grandfather something special for his birthday. They find a wonderful book that they know he would like, and they need to raise \$50 in less than a week to pay for it. They decide to enter various items in a contest in the county fair to try to win the money. In the process, they make some new friends and discover who has been ruining various displays at the fair. They are given the reward money for their efforts and are able to buy the gift for their grandfather.

The action of the story is carried in the dialogue. The characters and the plot seem fairly simplistic and stereotypical with many coincidences. Four siblings with a wide age range play and plan together throughout. They get to know a new neighbor because they help her find her lost little brother, who just happens to be the same age as Benny. They each have talents that are capable of winning in different categories at the fair. The guilty party obviously looks uncomfortable at the appropriate times. Many kids today could not relate the smallness of the old time county fair and the fact that everyone seems to know everyone, except for the stranger (whom the kids spoke to in the beginning without hesitation).

A few well done black and white sketches illustrate the text, and make it clear the new friends are black. This effort feels a little forced, as the relationships all seem shallow and race does not seem relevant in any way and is not spoken about (like someone is trying to be politically correct).

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 4

Judy Belcher
Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

Wiebe, Rudy. *Chinook Christmas*. Paintings by David More. Red Deer College Press, 1992. ISBN 0889950865. Hardbound, \$12.95. Gr. 4 - 6.

Vivid colors and fresh smells on full-page paintings make *Chinook Christmas* an unusual portrayal of Christmas Eve in a Mennonite Community on the Canadian Prairie of Southern Alberta, Canada. Jakie and Anni had always

found their Christmas tree in the muskeg when they lived up north. Now on the open prairie they are facing Christmas Eve without a tree. However, as the day unfolds, in unexpected ways they receive arm loads of tree branches and a box of Japanese oranges. The Christmas Eve service at the church warms hearts even as the bright lights streaming from the arched church windows glows on the dark prairie night.

In several places, some crude language used helped to depict the life of the people.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 3

Marie Knaupp
Retired Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

Winslow, Barbara. *Dance on a Sealskin*. Illustrated by Teri Sloat. Alaska Northwest Books, 1995. ISBN 0882404431. Hardbound, \$15.95. Gr. 2 - Adult.

Dance on a Sealskin is a story based on the Yupik Eskimo tradition of the "first dance" which is usually done before adolescence and represents the person's officially becoming a member of the community. The dance is done at the village social gathering, a potlatch, with gift giving and honoring of the dead.

The reader experiences this potlatch with Annie who had practiced with Grandmother before she went to be with her ancestors one sad night. The evening ends as Annie honors baby Olga who had been named after Grandmother. Gifts from her family to family and friends are given in honor of Grandmother and to show their pleasure in their daughter.

Author Barbara Winslow, who formerly taught in Yupik villages in Alaska, makes this story a valuable addition to resources on native customs in Alaska. The beautiful illustrations add to the text depth of feeling, especially in the facial expressions of the villagers. Readers young and old will find this a valuable addition to their collection of books on Alaska.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Marie Knaupp
Retired Librarian
Monmouth, Oregon

Wright, Susan Kimmel. *Dead Letters*. (Dead-End Road Mysteries). Herald Press, 1996. ISBN 083619036X. Paperbound, \$6.95. Gr. 3 - 8.

A fun adventure with an equally fun and endearing heroine, Herculeah Jones. The daughter of a private detective and a police sergeant; this young girl has mystery solving in her blood. Herculeah also has a faithfully, loyal sidekick in Meat (nicknamed for his voracious appetite).

It seems as though mysteries find their way to Herculeah on a regular basis. She has a sense of

danger inbred in her...each time she enters a potentially risky situation, Herculeah's hair frizzles and stands on end. In this story, she has just purchased a secondhand coat and finds a deadly letter in its lining (her hair frizzles). As she begins trying to locate the owner of this coat, Herculeah finds herself almost run down by a black car, chased by a Doberman, and held captive by the killer himself. Not one to be daunted by mere trivial events, Herculeah eventually solves the mystery and the crime.

As enjoyable as this book is, our heroine does stretch the truth at times and overrides her parents' rules to succeed in solving her case. Herculeah's friend Meat also talks about Halloween and the subject of Herculeah's parents' divorce is passed over lightly.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Michele Howe

Freelance Writer and Homeschool Mother

LaSalle, Michigan

Yates, Elizabeth. *Carolina's Courage*. Illustrations by Nora Unwin. Bob Jones University Press, 1989. ISBN 0890844828. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 3 - 6.

Although the Putnam family live on a pleasant farm in a valley of New Hampshire, Mr. Putnam knew that there was better land in the west than their worn-out, stony soil. After much discussion, Mr. and Mrs. Putnam tell their two children, Carolina and her older brother, Mark, that they will sell their farm and travel to a much better farming site far off in Nebraska.

After a long, cold winter, when signs of spring are beginning to show, the farm is sold. Now the family must make arduous and difficult decisions regarding what supplies they can take with them in the huge covered wagon. Tools, food for the trip, household furnishings, building supplies and items to make repairs on the wagon, are necessities. The children are told by their father that they may take only one item of their own, and it is mighty hard indeed for Carolina to leave her doll furniture behind, but she knows that her dearest possession, her doll, Lydia Lou, must go. Even Mrs. Putnam has to leave her beloved mantel clock behind, as the two oxen which will pull their wagon, must not be overloaded or the family's arrival in Nebraska would be in peril.

Neighbors of the Putnams see them off with warm wishes, and some prepared foods to help them with their first day's meals. Soon the Putnams settle into a traveling routine of twenty to thirty miles a day, thanks to the steady, strong oxen team. They meet interesting people along the way, and sometimes stop for a few days to rest the oxen, refresh themselves, and make needed repairs. Six days a week they travel, with one stop on Sundays, for Mr. Putnam insists that a day a week belongs to the Lord. Frequent referrals in the story to the family's faith and

dependence on God, show how they feel strengthened to face the unknown.

Carolina likes the travel, helping her mother, and being with her family. One time, during a stop on the banks of the Platte River, she is challenged to make a heart-rending decision, which will have far-reaching results.

Author Elizabeth Yates captures the conflicting emotions that pioneer families must have experienced when leaving the known, comfortable existence for the lure and promise of the unknown. Contemplating the hard decisions that the family must make on what is to go and what is to be left behind, puts the reader into their shoes.

Not many of the hardships of the trip are described. Carolina's many conversations with her doll might not appeal to the boys. This story would interest any child, particularly girls who like pioneer stories. Illustrations by Nora Unwin lend a great deal to the narrative.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Barbara Goy Taenzler

Freelance Writer and Book Reviewer

Glenwood, Iowa

Yates, Elizabeth. *Mountain Born*. Illustrated by Nora Spicer Unwin. Bob Jones University Press, c1993. ISBN 0890847061. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 3 - 6.

When Bidy, a tiny, black, seemingly stillborn lamb is resuscitated, she wins her way into Peter's heart and care. *Mountain Born* is the story of the life of a shepherd-child, his special relationship with one lamb, and of his growing up.

"The year had hinges on which it hung, and every hinge had something to do with the sheep: but that was the life on [Peter's] farm and the living

for his family, and it was right that the sheep should mark it for them." The hinges—the lambings, the docking of the lamb's tails, the shepherding, the attack of the wolves, the shearing, the coat finally made for Peter out of Bidy's wool, and Bidy's own self-sacrificing death—all mark the years for Peter and for his

growing up. Despite the dangers, Peter's farm is a wonderfully safe place for a boy to become a man—and for a reader to escape to.

Mountain Born is a book to savor. Simple yet symbolic, Elizabeth Yates' style of writing causes the reader to slow down, enjoy, and ponder. Her delicate balance of plot, place, character, and theme makes *Mountain Born* a delicious bit of reading.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Tammy Perron

Freelance Writer

Snohomish, Washington

Yates, Elizabeth. *A Place for Peter*. Illustrated by Nora Spicer Unwin. Bob Jones University Press, c1994. ISBN 0890847487. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 3 - 6.

Elizabeth Yates paints another gentle portrait of a young boy growing up in *Mountain Born's* sequel, *A Place for Peter*. When his mother leaves to care for his ailing uncle, Peter finds many of her responsibilities falling on him. Eager to prove himself to his reluctant father, Peter embraces the challenge.

First, he handles the sugaring up in the sugar bush alone. Then, encouraged by his success, Peter moves on to the more difficult tasks his father would normally handle. He determines to cut a path around the mountain to a neighboring farm. Despite a rattlesnake bite, Peter finishes his work and earns his father's respect and, upon her return, his mother's admiration.

Through well chiseled and nicely polished characters, Yates purveys the struggle to grow, the struggle to release, and the love, respect, and commitment of family. Yates' love and reverence for the land enriches the story and her firsthand knowledge of farm life adds authenticity. Faith, wisdom, and devotion are some of the threads woven into this gentle book. Two dozen black and white illustrations by Nora Unwin enhance the story.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Tammy Perron

Freelance Writer

Snohomish, Washington

READING THE RIGHT STUFF

TEACHING KIDS TO CHOOSE WISELY

by Michele Howe

A friend showed me the bargain she had gotten at a local garage sale; a boxload of books for a couple of dollars. As she began to pull the various paperbacks from the cardboard box, I noticed a popular selling series. I took a closer look at the cover which depicted hideous skeletal beings and other assorted eerie, nameless creatures. It gave me the shivers and rightly so, since the trade name for this series is "Goosebumps".

My initial reaction was what parent in their right mind would allow children to read these kinds of books? Sadly, for lack of time (and energy), many parents do not monitor the types of reading material which gets into their kids' hands and stays in their kids' minds.

As parents, we need to consistently assess the influences which contribute to our children's mental, spiritual, and emotional well-being. In a society such as ours, we would do well to remember, "For as he thinks within himself, so he is." Proverbs 23:7. Before our kids "check 'em out." we better be sure we already have.

* Learn where to shop. Give kids the opportunity to buy books at a local Christian book store. Order Christian discount catalogs such as Christian Book Distributors (508-977-5000). Or subscribe to the Christian Library Journal (541-479-5277) which provides reading incentive

ideas as well as quality books. In safe places like these, kids can pick and choose freely. Parents can relax too, knowing that other like-minded adults have previously read and reviewed the materials offered.

* Frequent the libraries with list in hand of known and trusted authors. Request the books through Inter-Library-Loan if your branch does not have the titles you desire.

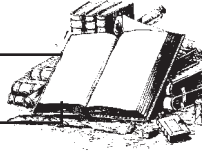
* Choose unfamiliar authors or new series with care. Read the inside and back cover. Check the computer to find out what other titles the same author has written. If one series is questionable, then another may be too. Frequently, the message is the same; it's just been watered down for a younger age group. Ask yourself questions like: "Does the hero/ heroine act in ways I would want my child to emulate?" "What is the message of this book?" "Will my child learn a positive lesson from reading this?"

* Read together as a family. Choose series books like: Chronicles of Narnia, Anne of Green Gables, Little House on the Prairie. Read together each evening; then celebrate the completion of the set by having a video party. Rent or borrow the videos of the same stories. Have popcorn, pop and candy...just like at the movies.

* When persistent requests come from a child to read books you're not certain your child is mature enough to understand, read one with your child. Then ask your child pointed questions regarding the characters and their motivations, their actions and beliefs. Don't forget to challenge them to find the message hidden within the book's pages. Postpone the coveted series for six months or a year if your child isn't ready. Then go back and try the process again.

Michele Howe is a freelance writer living in LaSalle, Michigan with her husband Jim (a public high school instructor) and their four homeschooled children.

BOOK REVIEWS



CHILDREN'S NONFICTION

220.9. Harrast, Tracy L. *My Mommy and Me Story Bible*. Illustrated by Gloria Oostema. Zondervan Publishing House, 1995. ISBN 0310922402. Hardbound, \$9.99. PS - K.

As a storybook paraphrase of the Bible, *My Mommy and Me Story Bible* is adequate. There are some minor (and infrequent major) inaccuracies in the biblical stories. Mostly this comes from simplifying and shortening the stories. The author includes the biblical references to each of the stories which would allow the parent to explain the story more fully later in life. Included with each reading is an activity to involve the child in the story. Younger children will be entertained by the activities.

The illustrations are excellent full-color drawings with intriguing details which will keep most children captivated.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 4

Janyre Stockinger
Freelance Writer
Grand Rapids, Michigan

248.8. Perseghetti, Jackie. *Caution : Dangerous Devotions*. Chariot Books, 1995. ISBN 0781402506. Paperbound, \$9.99. Gr. 3 - 6.

Devotions can be dangerous to your health...spiritual health, that is! Dangerous in that these devotions promise to take the reader where he's never gone before—taking him on an adventure of new depths of understanding both himself and God's Word.

Though black-line graphics entertain the curious reader, parental preview and guidance is encouraged. Selected chapters from each New Testament book are used, but parents should be aware of the obvious author perspective. The major weakness of this book is the intermingling of a loose paraphrase type of Bible story presentation and the author's beliefs and personal assumptions. A young reader would not be able to distinguish a difference between Bible truth and human opinion. The reader is told at the start of each selection to seek God's help as this journey is being taken. And the end has Bible reading suggestions with a question or two to make personal application.

A 6" x 9" quality paperback with user-friendly type and illustrations help fill up the 377 pages with spots called "Skill Time", "Cross Roads," "Thinking On Your Feet," and "Danger Ahead."

A page toward the front gives readers an idea as to what each graphic cue means before using the book.

There is no index to provide quick topical reference, but there is an incomplete appendix used by the author as a platform to present personal spiritual beliefs.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 4

Kari Janke
Freelance Journalist
Blanchard, Idaho

296.4. MacMillan, Dianne. *Jewish Holidays in the Fall*. ISBN 089490406X.

—*Jewish Holidays in the Spring*. ISBN 0894905031.

(Best Holiday Books). Enslow, c1994. Hardbound, \$16.95. Gr. 1 - 4.

Understanding the Jewish customs and holidays can be confusing to most lay people. In *Jewish Holidays in the Fall* simple dialogue and photographs help to increase our knowledge and lessen our confusion regarding the many holidays celebrated by the Jewish families of today. Readers will come away with a clearer view of the reasons behind the holidays. Studied in this book are: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Simchat Torah. The author also provides a good background chapter discussing the Jewish religion itself. As we turn from one chapter to the next, we join in the celebration depicted in the colorful photographs and the joy evident on the celebrants' faces. Another helpful addition to the book is the chart found in the back of the seasonal holidays and the glossary describing unfamiliar words or phrases.

The companion book, *Jewish Holidays in the Spring*, follows the same format as the preceding book. This volume studies the Jewish customs of Purim, Passover, Seder, Yom Ha-Atsma'ut, Lag B'Omer, and Shavout. With glossary in hand, this author's explanations are clear and easy to comprehend. Both of these books are great helps in developing a real appreciation for Jewish beliefs and customs.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Michele Howe
Freelance Writer and Homeschool Mother
LaSalle, Michigan

296.4. Schwartz, Howard. *Next Year in Jerusalem : 3,000 Years of Jewish Stories*. Illustrated by Neil Waldman. Viking, 1996. ISBN 0670861103. Hardbound, \$16.99. Gr. 3 - Adult.

Three thousand years ago the history of Jerusalem began. Almost from the beginning it divided into two streams—the actual and the legendary. Renowned folklorist Howard Schwartz has combined the two streams into a celebration of 3000 years of Jewish imagination. So many adventures and people to meet; for instance: Old Testament stories with a fairy tale twist; a bird who guides a poor Jewish family on their own special exodus; the original for Rudyard Kipling's Just-So-Story wherein King Solomon can speak with the animals; a vampire demon; Serah, who has lived longer than Methuselah; a miracle, wrought through a poor man's offering to God; the miraculous chair that was also a jigsaw puzzle.

Seeking to make this book worthy of Jerusalem's unique history, both the author and illustrator have given it a special look. Rainbow colors slowly fade into each other as the pages progress. Sidebars on almost every page explain the legends and history, giving you at least three readings in the one book: the stories, the sidebars, and a worthwhile but eye boggling attempt at reading the two together. Just as C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien before him, Howard Schwartz realizes that fairy tales can teach great truths. He uses the sidebars to introduce these truths and how they apply to the reader. Imagination is inspired by the beautiful, earth toned watercolors that accompany every story. These illustrations will help enlarge the adventure of reading to yourself. Because many of the stories are from oral tradition, and all are written in rich language *Next Year...* lends itself to the wonderful experience of inspired reading out loud.

There is a helpful glossary of unfamiliar words. Each story's derivation is listed at the end of the story as well as in the source list. During this time of special celebration in Jerusalem Next Year.. is a very timely book. It will be welcomed by Jews and Gentiles who look forward to "next year in Jerusalem."

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 4

Donna Eggett,
Freelance Writer
Maiden, North Carolina

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305.567. Schroeder, Alan. *Minty : A Story of Young Harriet Tubman*. Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Dial Books for Young Readers, 1996. ISBN 0803718896. Hardbound, \$16.99. Gr. 1 - 8.

The childhood of Harriet Tubman becomes lively historical fiction under the pen of author Alan Schroeder and through the expert brush of Caldecott Medalist Jerry Pinkney, who drew on his research from other illustrating projects to paint a beautiful yet historically accurate backdrop. While the narrative itself is fiction, the basic facts on which the story is set are derived from what is known of the childhood of Underground Railroad conductor, Harriet Tubman.

Young Harriet, christened Araminta and thus the nickname Minty, is a headstrong and stubborn house slave on the Brodas plantation in Maryland during the 1820's. As a result of several defiant acts and consequent demotions to the low position of field slave, Minty determines to run away to freedom. Minty's mother, Old Rit, advises "If your head is in the lion's mouth, it's best to pat him a little. Your head's in his mouth, Minty, but you sure ain't doin' any patten'. You're just fixin' to get your head bit off...Pat the lion, Minty. It ain't gonna kill you." Minty follows this advice for a time but never gives up on the idea of running for freedom. Realizing this, her father, Old Ben, begins teaching her survival skills like reading the stars and moss on trees and learning to swim. All the while Minty watches for her chance to run. The climax of the story comes when Minty is given the opportunity, though fleeting, to make her break for freedom. Her subsequent loss of courage sends her back to her cabin in tears, discouraged with her weakness but with the determination to hold on to her dream of freedom.

Minty presents the young reader with not only a view of the slave life of a young child in the pre-Civil War days, but also with the moral struggle of the slave, at any age, whether to stay and bend to the will of a master who is unjust or whether to defy the authorities at any cost. This story could be the beginning of a great discussion on obedience versus justice for older children. A one page afterword to the story briefly recounts Harriet Tubman's life as an adult slave, her eventual escape and consequent tireless efforts with the Underground Railroad.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

394. Branson, Mary. *Fun Around the World : Games, Crafts, Food, and Dress Ideas You Can Use*. New Hope, 1992. ISBN 156309052X. Paperbound, \$4.95. Gr. 3 - 6

Would you like to play "Toh Mantilakee" (Greece)? Or, how about whipping up a batch of "Mochi Cake" (Japan)? You could do both while wearing "Agbadas". (Nigeria) *Fun Around the World* by Mary Branson presents the United States as a "colorful patchwork quilt" containing over 500 different cultures. Branson works with this idea, exploring the building blocks of this diversity. She keeps the explanations of the various holidays simple, then progresses to the materials needed for each craft and recipe, and how to make it. Most of the articles can be accomplished by the child with a minimum of adult supervision. The section on dress ideas is of particular interest, adding an authentic flavor to pageants and other celebrations.

The book has a distinctively Christian slant, but the majority of the information is applicable for school and community use. The illustrations supplement the text, visualizing the instructions where possible. The bibliography assists in further exploration.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Su Hagerty
Freelance Writer
Issaquah, Washington

398.2. *Treasury of Christmas : Stories for Families*. Compiled by Robert Van De Weyer. Illustrated by Deborah Kindard. Dimensions for Living, 1994. ISBN 0687078210. Hardbound, \$15.00. Gr. 2 - Adult.

With a collection of short stories, interspersed with carols and verses, *Treasury of Christmas* shares the message of Christmas in unique ways. Some of the selected stories are based on the biblical Christmas story. In the "Fourth Wise Man," Artaban does not make it to worship Jesus, as he is compelled to use his beautiful jewels to help needy people as he makes his way to see Jesus. In the end he realizes that when we help people in need, we are serving Jesus. Not all of the stories focus on the Christmas story, but all follow the themes of sharing, helping, and caring for others. Boboushka, a story about a lady who gives gifts to sick and unhappy children, is taken from a traditional Russian story. Other stories take place in France, Poland, and Italy, giving the book an international flavor.

Robert Van De Weyer, the compiler of this collection of stories, made sure that every story contained a message that could be discussed and applied to the lives of children and adults. In "Papa Panov's Visitors," a story from Leo Tolstoy, we are reminded that when we help others, it is as if we were serving Jesus.

The stories and carols are attractively illustrated and care has been taken to include multicultural characters. The illustrator, Deborah Kindred,

was successful in showing pleasant expressions on the characters which add to the stories. This will be a useful book for those who need short, thought provoking stories to share around Christmas.

Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 4

Lynette Sorenson
Librarian, Northwest College
Kirkland, Washington

398.21. Lester, Julius. *John Henry*. Illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Dial Books, 1994. ISBN 0803716060. Hardbound, \$16.99. Gr. 3 - 6.

"Dying ain't important. Everybody does that. What matters is how well you do your living." These words are attributed to the African-American folk hero John Henry. According to legend, he worked on the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad in West Virginia and died after hammering out a tunnel while racing against a steam drill. As the tale explains: "He had hammered so hard and so fast and so long that his big heart had burst."

Newbery Honor winner Julius Lester has the unique distinction of having performed his own version of the legendary ballad as a former folk singer. He also draws upon historical sources, which are credited in the opening introduction.

The text is skillfully playful, inviting one to read it aloud. There's plenty of nonsense that kids love, too, such as "he laughed so loud, the sun got scared," and "he was so fast, the wind was out of breath trying to keep up with him," and best of all, the mountain that he challenged in the end was "as big as hurt feelings."

But what makes this book an undeniable winner are the superb watercolor illustrations by three-time Caldecott Honor Book artist, Jerry Pinkney. His style, reminiscent of Norman Rockwell, add depth and quality to each page.

This tale can be used to introduce children to many issues: the history of railroads, what life was like for African-American men and women in the 1870's, slavery, American ballads, and story-telling.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Kimm Swenson Gollnick
Writer, Editor
Marysville, Washington

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421.1. Bannatyne-Cugnet, Jo. *A Prairie Alphabet*. Illustrated by Yvette Moore. Tundra Books, 1992. ISBN 0887762921. Hardbound, \$19.95. K - Gr. 3.

In *A Prairie Alphabet*, one page is devoted to each letter of the alphabet and includes a sentence incorporating many words that begin with that letter. The sentence is the illustrated

with a beautiful, color painting. Each painting also includes many other items that being with a specific letter. Everything is centered around life on the prairie. For example, the letter B is, "Our Belgians, Bill and Bob, bed in the barn." The subjects range from home, garden, crops, transportation, etc. At the end is a list of all of the many words that can be found in the picture that begin with a particular letter. There is also a section which explains each situation illustrated and any items that may be unfamiliar.

Jo Bannatyne-Cugnet uses very clever text to give you a real feel for life on the farm and the prairie. The illustrations by Yvette Moore are beautiful paintings with great detail, vivid and bold colors. Each painting is like a look and find picture. The items are right in front of you, but you can't figure out the proper term that begins with the right letter. The information at the end of the book is very helpful. You will learn a lot of information and begin to feel as if you really understand the prairie. A delightful hardbound book with a sturdy library binding. This book will be around for many years to come.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Marcia Snyder

Librarian, Valley Christian School
Missoula, Montana

423.1. Terban, Marvin. *Scholastic Dictionary of Idioms*. Illustrated by Jon Devore. Scholastic Reference, 1996. ISBN 0590275496. Hardbound, \$15.95. Gr. 3 - Adult.

Ever wonder where a particular expression came from? Speculate no longer. *Scholastic Dictionary of Idioms* is here with a compilation of over 600 different phrases. This more than 200-page volume provides more than just the definition of old and new sayings. It also gives us the origin and the history behind those witty sayings we frequently use without a clue as to where the phrase derived.

Take the timeless saying, "Get your goat," this saying means "...to annoy very badly; to make a person angry." It comes from an American expression from the early 1900's when it was customary to place a goat inside a racehorse's stall to help calm the animal. If you wanted to "get someone's goat," you'd sneak in and remove the goat, thereby causing the horse to become upset.

Each phrase is listed in alphabetical order and then categorized separately by Key Word Index at the back of the book. A key word is listed along with several other possible words to check if you're trying to remember a certain saying and not sure what word it begins with.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Michele Howe

Freelance Writer and Homeschool Mother
LaSalle, Michigan

551.55. Cole, Joanna. *The Magic School Bus Inside a Hurricane*. Illustrated by Bruce Degen. Scholastic, 1995. ISBN 059044686X. Hardbound, \$14.95. Gr. 2 - 6.

Ms. Frizzle is at it again! Her class is learning about weather. Absolutely everything in the classroom is about rain, snow, sun, or wind. All the kids are doing a weather project and today the class is going on a field trip to the weather station. Ready or not, off they go in their school bus. No, wait, that's not a school bus, it's a hot air balloon. The class learns the basic lesson that hot air rises. This is applied to many weather principles such as the forming of clouds and also hurricanes. Of course, the class now finds themselves caught in the middle of one. The bus suddenly turns into an airplane and flies straight into the eye of the storm. When the class has sufficiently experienced the principles of weather first hand, everything is back to normal and they are at the weather station.

Joanna Cole has done it again. This latest story in the adventures of the Magic School Bus lives up to its reputation. The facts in the book are accurate and well researched. Ms. Cole has put them in an easy-to-read format. Many facts are also scattered throughout the book in the form of school reports done by Ms. Frizzle's class. These books are, of course, not a solo effort. Bruce Degen makes the facts fun to learn with his bright, captivating illustrations. He includes every little detail to add more meaning to the story. Pay close attention to the changing outfits of Ms. Frizzle, especially the shoes and the earrings. The author and illustrator are definitely a masterful team. This is a beautiful hardbound book with a reinforced library binding. The book is especially nice for youngsters to read because it will lay flat when opened.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Marcia Snyder

Librarian, Valley Christian School
Missoula, Montana

616.2. Carter, Alden R. and Siri M. *I'm Tougher than Asthma*. Photographs by Dan Young. Albert Whitman, 1996. ISBN 0807534749. Hardbound, \$14.95. K - Gr. 4.

Siri enjoys toads, piano, baseball and singing. She is a normal, active, elementary age student, but she has asthma. This is scary, but manageable. Dan Young's excellent color photographs show Siri in a variety of settings starting as a three-year-old who is diagnosed with asthma. Siri's book shows that a child with asthma still functions well in school, in family activities, and social activities. The book explains asthma, as well as allergy testing, medication and limitations. Severe asthma can limit a child's activities and keep them at home

with wheezing, coughing, and lungs filled with mucus. However, asthma can be helped with special medication and breathing exercises.

Follow Siri as she looks at a model of a lung and draws Horrid, the House Dust Mite. Find out about famous asthmatics like Teddy Roosevelt and Jackie Joyner-Kersey. A special section answers parent questions. This is an informative, well-written book, and will help young asthmatics gain confidence in themselves and their abilities.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Paula Stewart Marks

Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon

618.2. Parker, Gary. *Life Before Birth : A Christian Family Book*. Illustrated by Jonathon Chong. Master Books, 1992. ISBN 0890511640. Hardbound, \$12.95. Gr. 1 - Adult.

"Where do Babies come from?" If you cringe at the thought of these words, *Life Before Birth* by Gary Parker is the ultimate answer! This Scripture-based dialogue between a mom, dad, and child traces the journey from cell to birth, emphasizing God's plan and purpose for each life. Jonathon Chong and Lloyd Hight use colorful thought provoking cartoon type pictures to illustrate a baby's growth, compare and refute evolutionist and abortionist theories, show what DNA, sperm, egg, and birth defects are all about.

Written by a doctor, but simplified for children and adult readers, this book brings together scientific data and biblical input to explain God's plan and purpose for each life. This is an impressive book that should be read by parents over again and again to help children feel special and planned, not an accident of nature. This scripture based text will be an asset to parents and teachers everywhere as they approach the delicate task of sharing God's plan for each child. Each child is truly "knit together" and "fearfully and wonderfully made."

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Paula Stewart Marks

Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon

618.92. Watson, Esther. *Talking to Angels*. Harcourt Brace & Co, 1996. ISBN 0152010777. Hardbound, \$16.00. K - Gr. 2.

Esther Watson describes her autistic sister, Christa. She tells what Christa likes, how she communicates, and how it is hard for other people to understand Christa. This is a loving presentation of someone who is different, but no less valuable. This book can be helpful in acquainting children with autism.

Talking to Angels is illustrated by the author. The illustrations, while not particularly attractive, are

appropriate to the subject of the book and help to communicate the world as Christa may see it.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Karla J. Kessell

Librarian, Mount Vernon Nazarene College
Mount Vernon, Ohio

625.4. Hewett, Joan. *Tunnels, Tracks, and Trains : Building a Subway*. Photographs by Richard Hewett. Lodestar Books, Dutton, c1995. ISBN 0525674667. Hardbound, \$15.99. Gr. 5 - Adult.

Tunnels, Tracks, and Trains is a photographic essay that follows the construction of a subway in Los Angeles for a one and a half year period. The book examines the construction of the second of three sections of the subway from the planning stages until the actual installation of the trains. The book's approach is effective because it takes the immense job of building the subway and breaks it down into smaller, more understandable parts.

The book does an excellent job of dealing with more than the mechanical aspect of construction, introducing many of the people who work hard to make the subway become a reality. There is Kathryn Lim who helps design subway stations, Francisco Letelier who paints murals on subway walls, and many others with interesting and important jobs.

But what makes the book so engaging are the impressive pictures that fill the pages. These photographs bring the process to life and help to illustrate some of the different machinery and procedures explained in the narrative.

The book lingers precariously between two different age categories. While the narrative style is geared towards a younger age, some of the vocabulary may be too difficult for students in intermediate grades. A glossary for some of the more difficult words would have solved this problem.

Despite this concern, *Tunnels, Tracks, and Trains* is an interesting look into what the author calls "new and wondrous subterranean complexes."

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Chris Steenhof

Teacher
Smithers, British Columbia, Canada

633.2. Geisert, Bonnie. *Haystack*. Illustrated by Arthur Geisert. Houghton Mifflin, 1995. ISBN 0395697220. Hardbound, \$15.95. PS - Gr. 3.

Haystack is a circular story which illustrates the cycle of one haystack from plant, to harvest, then to shelter and food for farm animals, and then finally to fertilizer for the next crop. Children will be fascinated by the many purposes farmers had for one haystack. In this present age of

disposable products, this story is a good reminder of how we can find different uses for one item. *Haystack* is also a good tool for teaching about seasons and plants.

Bonnie Geisert's descriptive words with accurate farm terminology add to the beautiful color etchings of Arthur Geisert. Children will first be drawn to the large detailed illustrations of farm life and machinery of years past. Then the story of the haystack will teach children new vocabulary such as "swath, hydraulic lift, and windrows" as well as encourage a greater understanding of farm life, especially how farmers are affected by weather and the change in seasons. *Haystack* would be an informative as well as attractive addition to any children's library.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Susan Robinson

Librarian, Delaware Co. Christian School
Newtown Square, Pennsylvania

636.088. Chrystie, Frances N. *Pets : A Comprehensive Handbook for Kids*. Illustrated by Margery Facklam. Little, Brown, c1995. 4th rev. ed. ISBN 0316142816. Paperbound, \$8.95. Gr. 2 - 9.

Choosing a pet is like choosing a new member of the family. In order to become a good pet owner, children should be familiar with the specific needs a pet has. This excellent resource will help a child decide on the best pet for his or her situation. Frances Chrystie's wealth of information provides answers to questions on dogs, cats, small caged animals, fish, reptiles and amphibians, farm animals, and wild animals. This book will teach you how to feed and care for almost any animal. Find out how to housebreak a puppy, keep a hamster's cage clean, provide the right size cage for a bird, clean a fish tank, and feed a snake.

Besides learning about different animals and their characteristics, care and training, this handbook provides a section on common diseases and first aid. Did you know that a common aspirin could kill a cat? Or that brown wax in a cat's ear indicates ear mites? Or that guinea pigs and rabbits can get hair balls? This section is given as a supplement, not an alternative to veterinarian help. Overall, anyone who enjoys animals will find this book informative and interesting.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Paula Stewart Marks

Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon

636.7. Snow, Alan. *How Dogs Really Work!* Little, Brown and Company, 1993. ISBN 0316801348. Paperbound, \$6.95. Gr. 4 - Adult.

Alan Snow provides a quasi-non-fiction look at dogs, their behavior and care. This book contains more humor than accurate facts about dogs. Dogs are portrayed as being rather stupid, so cat lovers may appreciate the humor more than dog lovers. Sprinkled among the humor and comical illustrations are a few bits of practical advice for dog owners.

How Dogs Really Work! received the New York Times Best Illustrated Book, 1993. The illustrations present the inner workings of a dog as mechanical parts, such as gears, levers, springs, pistons, electronics, etc. If you are expecting a book which actually tells you how a dog works, this is not the book for you. Children will enjoy the humor in the mechanical interpretation.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 3

Karla J. Kessell

Librarian, Mount Vernon Nazarene College
Mount Vernon, Ohio

639.9. Johnson, Sylvia A. *Raptor Rescue : An Eagle Flies Free*. Illustrated by Ron Winch. Dutton Children's Books, 1995. ISBN 0525453016. Hardbound, \$15.99. Gr. 1 - 5.

Follow the captivating story of an injured eagle's journey from its discovery in a ditch to a specialized hospital that X-rays, operates, and provides a place of healing and recovery. Finally, enjoy the satisfaction of all involved when the eagle is well and ready for freedom. Emergency treatment is the norm for the Gabbert Raptor Center, located at the University of Minnesota. Specializing in diagnosing and repairing injured raptors, the center provides a unique unit of veterinarian doctors and volunteers dedicated to returning injured raptors to the wild.

Twice a year the public is invited to special release ceremonies to enjoy the raptors return to freedom. Indian drums in the release ceremony remind people that the eagle is traditionally considered a powerful spiritual force in Indian history.

Sylvia Johnson uses the eagle story to introduce her readers to raptors and shares fascinating tidbits of information about these birds that specialize in killing their own prey. Find out how many raptors exist; how they get injured, and how injury can be avoided. When a bird is injured what steps lead to rehabilitation? Why are exercise flights necessary? How can a tail feather be replaced? Bright colored, sharp photography by Ron Winch enhances the story. This informative book will be an asset for all young bird and animal lovers.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Paula Stewart Marks

Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon

649. Voetberg, Julie. *I Am a Home Schooler. Photographs by Taasha Owen. Albert Whitman, 1995. ISBN 0807534412. Hardbound, \$15.95. K - Gr. 4.*

Why do people choose homeschooling? Today more and more parents are deciding to take responsibility for how and what their children are learning. Every state allows some homeschooling, and there are now about one million homeschoolers in the United States. Julie Voetberg's book aims at the homeschooler, not as unique or different, but showing homeschooling as a positive normal alternative means of education.

Written from a nine-year old's perspective, Teigen, a young farm girl in Washington State, shares her daily activities. Taasha Owen's hand-tinted photographs capture the everyday life of the homeschooler. Up at seven to do chores, practice the piano, and then begin regular school work. Although many regular workbooks are used, homeschooling provides special advantages: working at your own pace, projects in the kitchen and outside, close family involvement, and less structure. Sometimes planning takes a backseat to emergencies, or special teachable moments, like finding frog eggs or owl pellets, or going to work with dad. Sometimes homeschool students get together for special classes or activities or field trips.

Homeschool students will enjoy this book that shows their type of education as valuable and acceptable. This would also be a good book for those around homeschoolers who are not convinced that homeschooling is a workable alternative.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Paula Stewart Marks

Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon

670. Jones, George. *My First Book of How Things Are Made : Crayons, Jeans, Peanut Butter, Guitars, and More. (Cartwheel Learning Bookshelf). Scholastic Inc., 1995. ISBN 0590480049. Hardbound, \$12.95. K - Gr. 4.*

Everyday objects...what are they made of? How do they get put together? George Jones answers these questions by taking a step by step journey into the production of each item. This book is like taking a field trip to each company. Did you know that crayons are basically wax and colored powder heated to 240 degrees and poured into molds? Or that footballs are flat pieces of tanned leather stamped, designed, then filled with a bladder? These and other fascinating tidbits are some of the details that take the puzzle out of ordinary things. Bright detailed photographs

follow each item step by step to give you a "You are there" feeling. See factories, machines, and the people who run the machines that make these real objects.

Teachers and parents will find this a useful resource in planning short science or history units. Students will be captivated by the bright pictures and interesting machines.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Paula Stewart Marks

Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon

745.5. Press, Judy. *The Little Hands Big Fun Craft Book. Illustrated by Loretta Trezzo Braren. (Little Hands @ Book). Williamson Pub, 1995. ISBN 0913589969. Paperbound, \$12.95. PS - K.*

Creative fun for two to six-year-olds is the theme for this book. A book that helps to celebrate family and friends, holidays and special events. Judy Press suggests craft projects, games to play, books to read, gifts to make, and both indoor and outdoor activities. All activities are incorporated into a central theme for whole learning. There are over eighty projects with two pages devoted to each one. Easy to follow directions and diagrams are included, along with the necessary patterns. Accompanying each project is a section called "More big fun" which gives ideas for related activities. Each craft project can be created from many recyclable items or scraps. An index and page of additional resources is also included.

This book is thoughtfully put together with little ones in mind. There are very specific directions for general rules of safety, especially concerning items that will require adult supervision. Loretta Braren's illustrations are delightful. The bright, cheery faces of children are on every page in a black and white sketch format. Preschool teachers, Sunday School teachers, and school teachers alike will find this book a great resource. The hand-puppets out of socks are especially adorable. Each project lends itself to variations that will make this book useful for years to come.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Marcia Snyder

Librarian, Valley Christian School
Missoula, Montana

759.13. Duggleby, John. *Artist in Overalls : The Life of Grant Wood. Chronicle Books, 1996. ISBN 0811812421. Hardbound, \$15.95. Gr. 4 - 7.*

From what type of life did American Gothic spring? Duggleby's text and the liberal use of Wood's own works tell the story of a truly American creative life. The very readable text chronicles Wood's life and struggles as a misfit student, a poor farm boy, and his rise as teacher/artist, and his patronage of Stone City as

well as his final prominence as a truly American art treasure.

Although short, this work is a very pleasing introduction to Wood's life and works. More detailed treatment is covered in Garwood's *Artist in Iowa: a Life of Grant Wood* (1971) and the International Film Bureau video set entitled, *Grant Wood, His Life and Paintings* (1984), both of which, however, are aimed at a much higher interest level (Gr. 10- Adult).

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Henry Terrill

Serials Librarian, Harding University
Searcy, Arkansas

792. Riley, Gail Blasser. *Wah Ming Chang : Artist and Master of Special Effects. ISBN 0894906399.*

—796.323. **Schleichert, Elizabeth. *Dave Bing : Basketball Great with a Heart. ISBN 0894906356.***

—818. **Hajdusiewicz, Babs Bell. *Mary Carter Smith : African-American Storyteller. ISBN 0894906364.***

(Multicultural Junior Biographies). Enslow Publishers, 1995-6. Hardbound, \$18.95. Gr. 4 - 7.

Wah Ming Chang

It's like meeting an old, revered friend, to read *Wah Ming Chang* by Gail Blasser Riley. Overcoming the hardships of bigotry and polio, Chang amazed the visual arts world with his list of credits: "etcher, painter, puppeteer, costumer, creator of special effects, filmmaker and sculptor." From the time he was seven to the present, Chang never ceases to explore the cutting edge of the possibilities in art. He is also responsible for many American advertising symbols, such as the Pillsbury Dough Boy. This book especially interests the Sci-Fi buff.

Dave Bing

Dave Bing by Elizabeth Schleichert is the story about being a good citizen. Dave Bing is a role model, a dedicated student at Syracuse University, a team player for the Detroit Pistons, an entrepreneur, founding multiple businesses with an employee base that is 80% Afro-American, a community leader, fund-raising for charities and working with children through organizations such as Big Brothers of America.

Mary Carter Smith

Even a gift carefully chosen and lovingly given may not be accepted. That incident, based on the shade of a child's skin, was the gateway into the life of choices for Mary Carter Smith. And her choices included becoming a school teacher, the springboard for her "other" career as an American "griot," a living dictionary knowing the history of her Black ancestors. *Mary Carter Smith* by Babs Bell Hajdusiewicz is a must-read

for Afro-American children in spite of some mature subject matter. (Murders of Carter's mother and son.)

Multicultural junior biographies are well-written, covering the salient points of the subject's life, showing that even through grave difficulties, the human spirit rises to triumph. Unfamiliar words are explained in the body of the text. The interest is high, the vocabulary low, making this series a good choice for the older student with a limited reading vocabulary. The books follow a successful formula: table of contents, acknowledgments, dedication, chronology, chapter notes, further reading, bibliography, honors and awards, and index. *R. C. Gorman: Navajo Artist*, (0-89490-638-0) and *Guadalupe Quintanilla: Leader of the Hispanic Community* (0-89490-637-2) are also in the series.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Su Hagerty
Freelance Writer
Issaquah, Washington

793.7. Kenda, Margaret and Phyllis S. Williams. *Math Wizardry for Kids*. Illustrated by Tim Robinson. Barron's, 1995. ISBN 0812018095. Paperbound, \$13.95. Order direct, 1-800-645-3476. Gr. 4 - 8.

Math Wizardry for Kids begins with, "This is your chance to become a math wizard." In 16 chapters, like Go for Golden Shapes and Patterns, and Crack Number Codes, and Send Secret Messages, Margaret Kenda and Phyllis Williams give creative and fun activities for learning and playing with math. They talk about the math all around us: in nature, art, games, and throughout life.

The book begins with guidelines for doing activities, like, "Before you begin a project, read the steps all the way through." It lists the tools that will be needed, which are basic supplies for doing many things. A section for parents and teachers gives ideas of how to encourage kids toward math. The type is blue, with illustrations which are cartoon characters and drawings and diagrams in red ink. The final chapter is entitled, "Throw a Math Party," and one is ready to after catching the authors' contagious excitement for math. An appendix explains how to use a protractor and construct various geometric shapes. An index and extensive glossary conclude the book.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Belcher
Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

974.4. *Pilgrim Voices : Our First Year in the New World*. Edited by Connie and Peter Roop. Walker and Company, 1995. ISBN 0802783147. Hardbound, \$16.95. Gr. 3 - 6.

The Nottinghamshire religious dissidents, "Separatists," were deemed treasonous by the King of England, so they relocated in Netherlands in the 1600's, where they were given shelter. The hardships of the lack of employment, the threat of war, and the loss of identity convinced the Pilgrims to make one more move, this time to the New World. The trip was sponsored through Merchants who invested money. In return, the Separatists and "Strangers," a group who increased their numbers to make the venture possible, agreed to send back produce and products to be sold in England. It was a seven-year contract. Connie and Peter Roop chronicle this adventure in *Pilgrim Voices*. The immigrants left the Mayflower and explored the territory around Cape Cod, finding it goodly land with many forests and an abundance of fowl. A great discovery was Samoset, an Indian who had learned some English from Englishmen who had fished at Monhegan Island. Through his help, the Pilgrims founded a settlement to help them survive the harsh winter. They planted crops with the seeds they had removed from abandoned Indian caches. The land animals, fowl, and fish were in abundance.

Pilgrim Voices is presented as a travel journal recorded in the manner one would suppose characteristic of the 1600's. The writing style is sparse and bleak as the weather encountered. The economy of words, perhaps, indicates the absence of the luxury of many adjectives. The names of people, places, events, and dates are safely entered. And the incidents are given flesh, bones, and color from the illustrations of Shelley Prichett. The people are life-like, the scenes believable. The book itself has a forward, glossary, bibliography, source information, further exploration for young readers, and an index.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Su Hagerty
Freelance Writer
Issaquah, Washington

974.7. Wetterer, Charles M. and Margaret K. *The Snow Walker*. Illustrated by Mary O'Keefe Young. (Carolrhoda On My Own Books). Carolrhoda Books, 1995. ISBN 0876148917. Reinforced Binding, \$11.96. Gr. 1 - 4.

On Monday, March 12, 1988, a sound jolts Milton awake. He runs to the window. It is snowing outside and the wind has snapped a huge branch from the tree outside his window. Milton notices it is late. He quickly dresses and runs downstairs to join his family. He is sure he is going to be late for school. Mother and Father explain to Milton that there will be no school

today. No one can even go outside. There are snow drifts covering the front door. The snow is so deep you would be buried alive.

"We will be fine," Mother replied, "we have plenty of food. It's too bad we don't have more milk though." Milton remembers what he has studied in school about the Alaskan Territory. He asks his father to help him build some snowshoes so he can go get the milk. Mother worries about Milton, but he bundles up and heads down the street to the store by way of the second story window. When Milton arrives at the grocery, Mr. Ash is quite surprised to see him. Milton buys five cans of milk and heads for home. The neighbors see Milton as he passes by and ask if they can buy a can of milk. Soon Milton is out of milk and has to go back to see Mr. Ash. Milton does this several more times, until finally he makes it home safe. Mother has been worried but Milton begs to go out again in the afternoon because so many of the neighbors need his help. Milton spends the rest of the afternoon running errands. His snow shoes start to snap and he is beginning to get chilled, but he keeps on until everyone has what they need. He is exhausted, but goes to sleep feeling good about his day.

Milton Daub is a true twelve-year-old hero. Charles and Margaret Wetterer have done an excellent job of bringing this character and history to life. You can truly sense the adventurism spring forth. What his parents saw as a crisis was to him only an adventure. Milton started out on a simple errand, but as he persevered his true character began to show. Milton began to put the needs of others above his own comfort and well being. Milton was a living example to his neighbors of Matthew 22:29 "Love your neighbor as yourself." Mary O'Keefe Young has created a realistic atmosphere by the use of watercolor illustrations. You can see the huge snow drifts and sense the pain on Milton's face as he leans into the biting wind. There are some full-page illustrations and many smaller ones placed throughout the book to keep you involved. The book also includes an Author's note and Afterword concerning the history of this event. The easy-to-read story format and smaller size will appeal to elementary age students. The book is bound with a sturdy library binding that will stand up to the heavy use it will receive. A fine choice for any library.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Marcia Snyder
Librarian, Valley Christian School
Missoula, Montana

976.9. Marston, Hope Irvin. *Isaac Johnson : From Slave to Stonecutter*. Illustrated by Maria Magdalena Brown. Cobblehill Books, 1995. ISBN 0525651659. Hardbound, \$14.99. Gr. 3 - 6.

The basis of the book *Isaac Johnson* by Hope Irvin Marston is a book that Isaac Johnson himself wrote in 1904, titled *Slavery Days in Old*

Kentucky, written to help pay for his children's college. In the first part of this book, the author retells the story of Isaac's life. He was born to a black woman and white man, who lived together as if married. His father was fairly successful and treated Isaac and his siblings well, but was not considered socially acceptable because of this lifestyle. At one point in his life he went to New Orleans to sell some goods and never returned. The sheriff came and took Isaac's family and had them sold as slaves. Isaac later found out that his father had sold them. Isaac never saw his brothers or mother again. Isaac was an intelligent person, and at his own admission, did much better than other slaves; but he was still treated as less than a human being. He didn't understand why he was treated so harshly. When Union soldiers camped near where he lived, he escaped to their camp, and then to the North, where he joined the Union Army. After the war he went to Canada where he learned to be a skilled stonemason and contractor. He married and raised a family.

The first part of the book, obviously developed from Isaac Johnson's original work, reads like a well written story. The last part of the book, with information from whatever records the author could find, is more like a non-fiction report. Much information is presented throughout about the way of life of blacks in the South before the Civil War and about Isaac's life after that time. (It does mention one black woman a master "kept for his own use.") Isaac Johnson was a very successful man who was responsible for building several significant buildings along the St. Lawrence River.

Most of the sketches are charcoal drawings in a fairly primitive style, which definitely add to the story. In the latter section of the book are several photographs of structures built by Isaac Johnson, and one of his grandson, who was interviewed by the author. The book closes with a list of important dates in Isaac Johnson's life, a bibliography for further reading, and an index. All in all, this biography tells a good story in an informative way.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Belcher
Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

976.9. Raphael, Elaine and Don Bolognese. *Daniel Boone : Frontier Hero. (Drawing America).* Scholastic, 1996. ISBN 0590479008. Hardbound, \$14.95. Gr. 2 - 3.

Daniel Boone is a true American hero. In *Daniel Boone*, authors Elaine Raphael and Don Bolognese present snapshots of this adventured-filled life, showing us the courageous young boy facing a panther, the adventurous man finding new routes through the wilderness, the caring father rescuing his daughter who was kidnapped by the Indians. We are introduced to his wife, his

daughters, the townspeople, and their way of living in early America.

Vignettes from the colorful life of Daniel Boone are worded to delight the young reader. The sentences are simple and keep the story line spinning along. The illustrations are generous, occupying perhaps 60% of the book. The text, at times, seems to be added almost as an afterthought. The closing pages are devoted to a quick art lesson, affording the reader opportunity to replicate drawings of the main characters.

The books in the Drawing America series also include *The Story of the First Thanksgiving*, *Pocahontas: Princess of the River Tribes*, and *Sacajawea: The Journey West*.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Su Hagerty
Freelance Writer
Issaquah, Washington

978. Patent, Dorothy Hinshaw. *West by Covered Wagon : Retracing the Pioneer Trails. Walker and Company, 1995. ISBN 0802783775. Hardbound, \$15.95. Gr. 3 - 5.*

West by Covered Wagon by Dorothy Hinshaw Patent is the account of the modern-day Miller family, who, with a group of their friends, set out every Memorial Day to replicate the wagon ride experienced by many American pioneers in the 1800's. The author switches back and forth between the present and the past, drawing comparisons, generously quoting statistics. She gives the reader a bird's-eye view of wagoning. The short chapters deal with the specifics such as the animal power and making camp.

A highlight of the book are the imaginative photographs and drawings added by William Munoz. The map shows the routes commonly used by the pioneers, and adds small illustrations of local animals and places of interest.

For the student studying the migration west, this book may be used as a reference. It also doubles as an interesting leisure read. The occasional difficult word is not always prepared by contextual clue, so this book is not suggested for the older reader with a limited reading vocabulary.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Su Hagerty
Freelance Writer
Issaquah, Washington



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059044686X. Scholastic, HBB, \$14.95.

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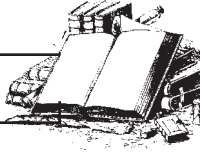
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BOOK REVIEWS



YOUNG ADULT FICTION

Bly, Stephen A. *Stay Away from That City...They Call It Cheyenne.* (Code of the West; 4). Crossway Books, 1995. ISBN 0891078908. Paperbound, \$8.99. Gr. 4 - Adult.

Gunfights, saloon brawls, and lynchin' parties. How can you top Tap Andrews, a Christian and an acting marshall, in a place like Cheyenne? It takes a saddle full of faith and a pony full of patience for Tap to safely get through these adventures in the fourth book of the Code of the West series.

Tap is determined to do what's right. He desires to see this wild west town become tame, even if few of its citizens have no regard for the law. Anyway, who really is behind all the commotion in their little town? His wife Pepper is getting worried and her fears make her feel worse than she's already felt! What's to be done? Even though Tap's worries are relieved when the city counsel dismisses him, Tap just can't stop caring and trying to bring justice to Cheyenne.

Bly, a master of western adventure series, takes you back to the wild west in this (and two other) western series. If you like the "John Wayne" type stories with a Christian twist, this one's for you. Subplots of underhanded deputies and vigilantes further the intrigue. Though at times the story line seems to bunny trail with underdeveloped bits of romance between Tap and Pepper and hard-to-read wild west talk, the book is worthy reading for those who enjoy western novels.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 4

Susan Adderley

International Ministries, ACSI
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Bly, Stephen A. *The Final Chapter of Chance McCall.* (The Austin Stoner Files; 2). Crossway Books, c1995. ISBN 0891079033. Paperbound, \$11.99. Gr. 9 - Adult.

When the manuscript of the final chapter of Chance McCall's fiction book about buried Confederate gold arrives at the publishing house, a string of strange events is set in motion. When the Fed-Ex package disappears, editor Lynda Austin decides to travel to Montana to personally look for the missing manuscript which contains the treasure map.

Lynda flies to Wyoming to meet her cowboy friend Brady Stoner in this second book in

Stephen Bly's Austin Stoner Files, The Final Chapter of Chance McCall. From the beginning, their trail is dogged with mishaps and disasters. Not only do individuals from Lynda's publishing house continue to pop up, but a former acquaintance of Brady's is seeking revenge on Brady. Things heat up even more when Lynda hears that McCall has died in a diving "accident" in the Bahamas. As the story draws to a conclusion, all of the characters converge on the Montana lake and the dishonest treasure-seekers are caught and dealt with.

Although the development of the characters is weak and the dialogue rather shallow, the story is packed with action. Through all of their adventures, Brady and Lynda come to the realization that God is at work even in circumstances that seem out of control.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Esther Knaupp

Librarian, Santiam Christian School
Corvallis, Oregon

Bruchac, Joseph. *Children of the Longhouse.* Dial Books for Young Readers, 1996. ISBN 0803717946. Hardbound, \$14.99. Gr. 6 - 8.

Young Mohawk boy Ohkwa'ri (Bear) is resting in a hidden cave when he overhears Grabber and his three friends planning an attack on a neighboring Indian nation. Although Ohkwa'ri used to look up to Grabber, he knows the plan is wrong and reports it first to his level-headed twin sister Otsi'ia (Flower), and then to his grandmother who is a very important leader of the tribe, the Clan Mother. The Clan Mother and war captain Two Ideas plan a confrontational meeting between Ohkwa'ri and Grabber. The entire people listen. Two Ideas ends the discussion by grabbing one of the plotters by the throat and almost braining him with a war club. "This is what it means to go to war," he says.

Children of the Longhouse (the Mohawk Indians) is an easily read, entertaining, and educational book of 150 pages by Joseph Bruchac. He weaves Indian legend and culture throughout the adventure story. Thankfulness is a main theme. Respect for elders, attention to their wisdom and guidance, love of nature and family are others. The book's tension peaks when the clan divides into two teams, old men and young men, to play a stickball game (lacrosse). Ohkwa'ri is chosen to play on the old men's team in place of Thunder Voice who is ill. He knows Grabber and his

friends will look for opportunities to attack him, so he and his sister ask for grandmother's advice. This passing of practical, sometimes light-hearted, wisdom from the older generation to the children is a strong point of the book. It also contains a wealth of fascinating detail; for example the ball used for their lacrosse game was made of deer hair tightly covered with deer skin. Ohkwa'ri scores first, then Grabber ties the game. When Ohkwa'ri thoughtlessly decides to take a short cut to the goal through a dangerous ravine, Grabber lies in wait. But it is Grabber who falls down the cliff, dislocating and cutting his leg. Ohkwa'ri saves him, earning his thanks and respect.

The book's Afterword gives more detailed information about the Mohawk, including a short description of today's model community in New York. Its four pages will fascinate adults, and have value for students. Six titles are listed under Suggested Reading, and the book ends with a very helpful glossary and pronunciation guide. *Children of the Longhouse* is both a good adventure and an entertaining history book. Some Christian librarians may hesitate before including a book that contains Indian folklore and religion in their collection. However, I found this book readable, informative, and inoffensive.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 4

Lynn Harding

Librarian, Snohomish County Christian School
Lyndon, Washington

Cutler, Jane. *My Wartime Summers.* Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1994. ISBN 0374351112. Hardbound, \$15.00. Gr. 5 - 8.

My Wartime Summers is a coming-of-age story, dealing primarily with Ellen, her thoughts and feelings about World War II, and her Uncle Bob. Bob has grown up in Ellen's household, keeping her from being an only child completely, and is her father's younger brother. As each year passes, Ellen's preoccupation with the war and Uncle Bob's whereabouts while he serves in the Army continues until his eventual homecoming. By this time, Ellen has learned that war is more than just a game and life's changes are inevitable, even if painful.

Jane Cutler has formatted this book in a rather unusual way. It has three main divisions, 1943, 1944, and 1945, and she only writes of the summers taking place during wartime. The story is told in the first person and Ellen's character

and commentary are very believable as that of a middle school-aged student of the 1940's.

Today's middle school students will enjoy reading of a girl their own age yet in a different era. *My Wartime Summers* could also produce an interesting book report on the subject of World War II fiction.

There is one instance of profanity. Uncle Bob gets drunk when he is home on leave and Ellen is surprised her father doesn't give him "what-for" but rather says, "I guess the Army's made a man out of you, Bobby." Ellen's friend's mother, Darlene, is drinking beer and also gives a taste to Ellen

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 3

Cecil Carey
Middle School Librarian
Plano, Illinois

Doyle, Peter Reese. *Launched from the Castle.* (A Daring Adventure; 7). ISBN 156179368X. Paperbound, \$5.99.

—*Escape from the Black Forest.* (A Daring Adventure; 8). ISBN 1561793973.

Focus on the Family Publishing, 1994-5. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 6 - 9.

If your kid is in the mood for action, pick up one of Peter Reese Doyle's Daring Adventure Series. These fast paced books with international settings may satisfy his thirst for travel and adventure.

In *Launched from the Castle*, David and the Darings discover a hang glider hidden in an ancient German castle. Somehow they must uncover the link between the hang glider and a jewelry theft at a nearby estate.

In *Escape from Black Forest*, Mark and Penny Daring and their friend, David Curtis, sniff trouble in the air when they spot archenemy Herr Hoffman in Freiburg, Germany. Trailing him to the Black Forest, they unravel his plan—to smuggle nuclear weapons from Russia through Germany into Iran.

The strength of Doyle's stories lie in their action-driven plot and exotic settings; their weakness is the lack of character development. In fact, the characters are so indistinguishable, their lines are almost interchangeable. And these kids are nice, so nice that they're hardly unrecognizable as teenagers. Nonetheless, if you're looking for clean, fast adventures spiritualized with an occasional prayer or statement of faith, Doyle's books are a sure bet. In the Daring Adventures, good always overcomes evil and there's always another adventure right around the corner.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Tammy Perron
Freelance Writer
Snohomish, Washington

Elmer, Robert. *A Way Through the Sea.* Illustrated by Chris Ellison. (The Young Underground; 1). Bethany House Publishers, 1994. ISBN 1556613741. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 5 - 8.

Helsingor, Denmark, during World War II is the setting for this exciting, informative, and well written novel, *A Way Through the Sea*. Robert Elmer has woven a fascinating tale of eleven-year-old Peter Andersen and his twin sister Elise's escapades during these dangerous years in Europe.

From the opening of the novel, the reader experiences life through Peter Andersen's point of view. And while he and his family personally have nothing to fear from the German occupation, they are concerned about their Jewish friend, Henrik, and his family. The action of the story quickly picks up as the Nazis walk the streets, patrol the harbors, and fly overhead without ceasing. Then, their worst nightmare begins. The Andersen's find out that the Nazis will round up all the Jews in Denmark and send them to the prison camps in Germany. What can they do to help? It doesn't take them long to realize that they must help get as many Jews to Sweden as possible, the only place of refuge left for their many Jewish friends. The vehicle for this great escape? None other than Uncle Morgan, Mr. Andersen's brother and a sea captain, who willingly places his own life in danger and provides a way through the sea for the Danish Jews.

This story is based on actual events that happened in Denmark in 1943 and, although the characters are fictional, it definitely has a realistic flavor. This novel would be an asset to any school library and would be an excellent vehicle to enrich a study of World War II and the plight of the Jews in Europe

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Karen Orfitelli
Freelance Writer, Teacher
Manchester Connecticut

Elmer, Robert. *Into the Flames.* (The Young Underground; 3). Bethany House Publishers, 1994. ISBN 1556613768. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 5 - 8.

Peter and his sister, Elise, have a job with the Danish Underground delivering The Free Dane in Occupied Denmark. They feel a little young for the job, but they have much loyalty to their country. They meet a group of Christians who are praying for their friends who are imprisoned and they confide in their grandfather. He informs their parents of their activities on the same day they are caught—while helping to move a printing press, they take a risk and are caught and

sent to prison. Peter learns to rely on God through a fellow prisoner. He sees a passage that he memorized from Isaiah fulfilled: "When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze."

The characterizations are authentic and believable. Our heroes could be normal people who feel very strongly about a cause. The intrigue of working with the Underground and the steady faith of the Christians in the face of adversity make the book a hard one to put down. The characters learn about the suffering of various prisoners and also have first hand exposure to German methods of interrogation. Even though the incredible evil and violence of the war are definitely part of the story, death and destruction are not glamorized. The story has lots of valid and interesting information about the operation of the Underground and German occupation and prison life.

The premise of the story, that two eleven- or twelve-year-old kids could be thrown into prison as an example to others, may not be totally realistic, but certainly would draw the young reader into the action of the story. The only illustration is on the cover; there is a simple map preceding the text. The simple faith portrayed in the life of the believers is definitely inspiring.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Belcher

Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

Elmer, Robert. *Chasing the Wind.* (The Young Underground; 5). Bethany House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1556616589. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 4 - 8.

Treasure at the bottom of the sea! What could be more attractive for twelve-year-old twins Peter and Elise and their friend Henrik? World War II is just over and rumors of stolen treasure being hidden by Germans piques the interest of the three detectives. They begin to follow the clues and get a little too close to some suspicious characters. One afternoon, while searching for the answers to their questions they get trapped under a tarp. The small ship takes off and they are taken captive on the last German U-boat left after the war. On their way to South America in the cramped and dirty submarine, with no one at home in Denmark with any details as to their whereabouts, fear takes over. They all begin to wish they had listened to Grandfather's prayers and talk about God.

On the sub, the children have to live by their wits in order to survive. They begin to help the cook in the galley and as they help with food preparation, they gather the details of the treasure the sub is carrying. The crew has one goal—to get to South America alive and divide up the treasure. Then they discover they are being followed by another ship. Will the hurricane

destroy them before they get to land? Or will the disagreements between the captain and the commander bring the terrifying voyage to an early end?

This story is packed with adventure. The characters are well developed and easy to relate to. Even though the situation is a bit unbelievable, it is good fantasy. The characters work through situations and use their brains to get out of difficult situations. The story line and number of characters sometimes gets a bit complicated and maybe a bit hard to follow. Also, the children are from Denmark and speak Danish and the Germans obviously speak German. Elise is in charge of translation but because the whole story is written in English, the situation gets a bit complicated. However, the reader with a good imagination and the ability to sort through the details, will enjoy this exciting mystery.

Robert Elmer has created a wonderful series for students in grades four and up. The word pictures are very vivid. Each chapter is short and filled with riveting adventure. This title is the fifth in the "The Young Underground Series" which was "inspired by stories from Robert's Denmark-born parents, as well as friends who lived through the years of German occupation." A creative parent or teacher could use this title as the starting point to lead students from fiction to biographies of Christians who lived through the war years.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 4

Sharon Ann Rau
Librarian, Valley Christian Schools
Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada

Foreman, Lelia Rose. *Shatterworld*. Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1995. ISBN 0802851126. Paperbound, \$6.00. Gr. 5 - 8.

Shatterworld, by Lelia Rose Foreman, is an intriguing, science fiction story of some families who escape from earth and travel to a far planet they name New Earth. They develop a colony there and work at developing farmland to grow their crops. Everyone is needed to do the work, including twelve-year-old Rejoice and her rebellious teen-age brother, Stronghold. Their mother and father and brain-damaged baby brother play important parts in the story, also. Rejoice is absolutely fascinated by the stars and moons of this place, and wants to pursue research of them, but she is needed to do her part for the farm. She gets caught in a storm on the ocean and discovers the hexacrabs, large bright blue creatures with six jointed crab legs and tentacles and three eyes. As the people and creatures get to know each other, Rejoice discovers an asteroid in the sky that is on track to destroy New Earth. She prays for a solution to the problem, along with the other families, and God gives her the answer. The book ends with some leaving to work on the asteroid, and the elder thanking Rejoice for answering God's call.

The only illustration is on the cover. It shows Rejoice gazing upward with two hexacrabs looking on. The use of names seems to be a prevalent part of this work, with some being more creative than others. Naming the moons Big Potato, Small Potato, and Smaller Potato seems a little weak; but naming the asteroids things like Opportunity, Deceit, Anger, Boredom, and so on makes one think. It did not quite fit for a community to be developing and learning many kinds of science, but having an aversion to astronomy, except that the leader interpreted their future by his own experience, "Astronomy is not practical." Some pilgrim themes were used and the storyline has a strong permeating sense of God's call and his protection.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Belcher
Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

Gustavson, Dave. *The Mysterious Case. (Reel Kids Adventures; 4)*. YWAM Publishing, 1995. ISBN 0927545780. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 5 - 12.

Fifteen-year-old Jeff Caldwell, his sister, Mindy, and their friend, K.J., fly from Los Angeles with the Reel Kids Club to Bogota, Colombia, to videotape Christian ministry work at a street kids' youth center. Their goal: to air the video on American prime time television. Upon arrival in Bogota, Mindy is shocked to find that K.J. has picked up a burgundy suitcase at the airport—identical to hers, but belonging to someone else. That "someone else," they learn, is a member of the deadly Colombian drug cartel, who demands its return. Afraid to seek help from police who are controlled by drug rings, the teens face their dilemma with courage, prayer, and love. Jeff is inspired to apply the love principles of I Corinthians 13 in dealings with Carlos, the drug lord, and with street kids who reject them.

Believable characters with high reader identity move through a dangerous, well-paced plot of threatening phone calls, rendezvous deadlines for the return of the suitcase, a kidnapping, an earthquake, and a fearful ride in a fiery airplane. Suspense escalates steadily when the trio finds \$50,000 hidden in the case, which is subsequently stolen by Antonio, hardened leader of street kids and notorious thief. In perilous situations the kids take time to pray aloud with their leaders; prayers appear in the story's text. In spite of obstacles, the Reel Kids work at the youth center, videotape all their experiences, and go sightseeing.

The gospel message shines through peer exchange as Jeff and K.J. give their testimonies to street kids, some only four or five years old, who've come to the center for food and clothing. The author details two personal salvation experiences: those of Roberto, a young boy at the center, and Antonio (abused orphan of murdered drug lord parents) who scoffingly calls

Jeff's message "garbage," but later, recovering from a gunshot wound in the hospital, forgives his abusers, releases his anger, and receives Jesus as his Savior and Father.

Because Mindy has done research before their trip, the author can convey to the reader tantalizing and factual information about the topography, climate, and tourist attractions of Bogota and the surrounding countryside. Besides its leisure reading appeal to both boys and girls, the book would serve as content area literature in a social studies unit on South America.

The author's purpose in his masterful blend of truth and fiction directs attention to the plight of millions of very young street children around the world. This excellent mystery adventure in a dangerous foreign setting, written with suggestion and reporting techniques rather than graphic violence (except for a brief knife fight), models courageous faith, the importance of prayer, and the power of Jesus' love to draw all men to himself.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Rhonda Marie Lackey
Freelance Writer, Retired Teacher/Librarian
Tukwila, Washington

Holland, Isabelle. *The Promised Land*. Scholastic, 1996. ISBN 0590471767. Hardbound, \$15.95. Gr. 6 - 8.

The Promised Land, Isabelle Holland's sequel to *The Journey Home*, is set on the prairies of Kansas where orphans Maggie and Annie Lavin have lived for the past three years. Maggie, fifteen, and Annie, ten, have found a loving and secure home with James and Priscilla Russell who adopted them from the orphan train after their mother died in New York City.

The girls love Uncle James and Aunt Priscilla, but deep inside they both have a sense of not fitting into prairie life. After all, not only are they from a rough and tumble Irish neighborhood in New York, but they have also been brought up in the Catholic religion when everyone else out West is Protestant. In spite of these inner struggles, life goes on happily for the girls until one day when their mother's brother, Uncle Michael, steps back into their lives. He is determined to bring them back to New York City where they can be raised in the true religion of their Irish heritage.

Holland paints a vivid picture of the emotional, spiritual, and even physical struggles that take place in the adults as well as the children as Maggie and Annie's future is decided. And, as much as the girls love Uncle James and Aunt Priscilla, the seed of doubt about whether or not they belong in the prairie persists, causing the reader to wonder how the story will be resolved.

This Scholastic hardcover book is a joy to read and the conflicts the girls experience are genuine and understandable. While Holland highlights the major differences between the Protestant and Catholic faiths during discussions between the Russells and Uncle Michael, no bias is detectable.

Annie's admission that she still prays to the Blessed Virgin, while completely congruous in the context of the story and her struggle, may be troubling to some.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 4

Karen Orfitelli
Freelance Writer, Teacher
Manchester, Connecticut

Jackson, Dave and Neta. *The Warrior's Challenge : David Zeisberger.* Illustrated by Julian Jackson. (Trailblazer Books). Bethany House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 155661473X. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 4 - 7.

Several Indian tribes joined together—with a love for Jesus Christ as their common bond. When political unrest caused them to leave their beloved village in Pennsylvania, known as Tents-of-Peace, to set up a new village in Ohio, young Joseph Shabosh and his father traveled in the group. His friend, David Heckstein, a boy who was injured as a young child and unable to walk, was also in the procession. David was carried on a special basket made by his mother, Anna Heckstein, and sometimes carried by some of the strong young men. Also traveling with the group was David Zeisberger, a Moravian missionary, the spiritual leader and pastor of the two hundred Indians.

The Warrior's Challenge shows how Joseph had to choose between the Christian way of living and loyalty to his father and friend David, or the "old ways" which sound attractive when described by Opeechee, a Mohegan warrior who continued to show up in Joseph's life. After growing weaker, David dies. His life touched Joseph's and caused him to make stronger positive choices.

Dave and Neta Jackson follow the lives of David and Joseph. Prior to the story and in the epilogue, they explain that the story is based on the life of the real David Zeisberger. They tell what became of the group after the story.

The illustrations by the authors' daughter are simple yet attractive. This would be a good story for children to read to themselves. The discussions between David and Joseph especially, deal with problems applicable in most young people's lives. Even when mistakes are made, by Joseph and then his father, forgiveness and then a solution is possible.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Anita Utley
Faith Christian School
Mead, Washington

Lehman, Yvonne. *Tornado Alley.* ISBN 1556617054. (White Dove Romances; 1).

—*Secret Storm.* ISBN 1556617062. (White Dove Romances; 2).

Bethany House Publishers, 1996. Paperbound, \$4.99. Gr. 6 - 12.

Natalie Ainsworth, at sixteen, is just old enough to begin dating. Her parents have raised her carefully in the ways of the Lord, and her church and youth group have provided a secure foundation and protective boundaries; but even with the best teaching and role models, adolescence is a time of confusion, temptation and mixed emotions.

Tornado Alley, by Yvonne Lehman, centers around Natalie and her family. They live in America's heartland. Early in the book, her church youth group launches into a new program called the White Dove Club where students commit themselves to abstinence until marriage, and a life of purity and availability to God.

Then Natalie meets Scott Lambert. Scott is consider to be the great catch of all the girls in her junior class. Can she maintain her commitment to purity and godliness and still pursue her growing friendship with the handsome young man? When a tornado rips through her home town, both youngsters discover strengths within themselves that go far beyond the obvious surface attraction.

The White Dove series of romance books for teenagers promises to offer more than just the popular "boy meets girl" theme. There is depth and good Christian value, also. This first book not only deals with the unpredictable and confusing emotional highs and lows of puberty, but also the issues of abstinence, commitment, and purity. Strong Christian values set in a safe and enjoyable format of teenage romance and friendship will make this series very popular with teenagers, especially girls.

Natalie Ainsworth and Scott Lambert are back in Yvonne Lehman's *Secret Storm*, the second of the White Dove Romance books. This time, Natalie has been invited to spend the weekend with Scott and his family at their home away from home at posh Lake Oakwood. It seems like the answer to any girl's dream, but Natalie is concerned about the way Scott is so allusive

about discussing his family, particularly his mother. What she doesn't know, and what Scott fears telling her, is that his mother is an alcoholic.

One other thing that makes the weekend uncomfortable is the presence at the lake of Katlyn Chander. Arrogant, rude, and somewhat vindictive, she boasts often that she was Scott's previous girl friend. When Katlyn's older sister, Jennifer, invites everyone to their place for a cookout, what seems like an innocent outing turns dangerous. Scott and Natalie both need to fall back on their White Dove commitment to purity and obedience to Christ in all things. Too much drinking, particularly by Scott's older brother, Zac, leads the kids into tragic circumstances.

Secret Storm, like the first book in the White Dove series, *Tornado Alley*, deals well with very real issues that teenagers face. The focus in this book is alcohol, not only how it affects young people directly when they make right and wrong choices concerning it, but also how it affects families when one or more members is over indulgent. Scott has to make decisions both concerning whether he will drink and whether he will accept and forgive his mother who is alcoholic.

Once again, this book is strong in good Christian values as it walks the two teens through a slippery and dangerous path of choices, wrong versus right. Tragic and very real consequences unfold all around them as they seek righteousness amidst friends and relatives who fall short. Their example in the end does much to help and encourage those around them.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Gayle Chessman Haberman
Teacher, West Hills Christian School
Portland, Oregon

Lewis, Beverly. *A Cry in the Dark.* (SummerHill Secrets ; 5). Bethany House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1556614802. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 5 - 8.

Merry Hanson has a secret. One that's not going to stay secret very long. Merry's secret is she's found a baby. Author Beverly Lewis has added a charming story to her SummerHill Secrets series. When Charity is abandoned on Merry's doorstep by her birth parents, Merry decides the baby is a gift from God. Now all she has to do is convince her family to adopt Charity. She must also convince her Pennsylvania Amish friend, Rachel, to help her hide the baby until she has time to approach her parents about the adoption.

Soon everyone in the neighborhood seems to have found out about baby Charity. The Amish neighbor ladies find her the center of attraction at their quilting bee. Ruby Spindler, eccentric old maid, is Merry's last hope for finding someone to care for Charity. And her boy friend Levi is curious about the baby.

A Cry in the Dark teaches a lot of lessons about love. There's love for the helpless infant and a surprising love for a snooty old neighbor lady. There's the discovery of a best friend's love and worry over a boy friend's love. Love for God ties it all together. The story has an interesting combination of old Amish traditions and the modern problem of abandoned babies. The solution, although predictable, is a satisfying ending. The stories in the SummerHill Secrets series are complete in each book.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Myrleemay Pittman Crane
Freelance Writer, Editor
Alderwood Manor, Washington

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Meyer, Carolyn. *Gideon's People*. Gulliver Books/Harcourt Brace & Company, 1996. ISBN 0152003045. Paperbound, \$6.00. ISBN 0152003037. Hardbound, \$12.00. Gr. 5 - 8.

Sensitivity and a realistic portrayal of young people's feelings are the hallmarks of Carolyn Meyer's newest book, *Gideon's People*. Set in the early 1910's, the novel focuses on the cross-cultural experiences that arise when the wagon of a twelve-year-old Jewish boy, Isaac Litvak, overturns and he is forced to recuperate in the home of a kind Amish family.

At first, the differences between the two ethnic groups make it difficult for Isaac to relate to his Amish hosts. Simple things like diet and language, taken for granted by both the Jewish and Amish families, become stumbling blocks to understanding. But gradually, as Isaac's stay stretches into two weeks, he gains insight into the inner workings of the Amish family. He soon realizes that something is wrong. Sixteen-year-old Gideon has doubts about many of the Amish customs, and his younger sister Annie is worried about what he'll do. Isaac gets drawn into Annie's concern, and soon learns that he has more in common with the Amish than he thought.

Carolyn Meyer is an excellent writer, her prose smooth, flowing, and believable. The characters are deftly drawn, involving the reader utterly in the lives of Isaac, Annie, and Gideon. The time period is cohesive and necessary explanations flow naturally within the text. *Gideon's People* is an excellent portrayal of a young person's

struggle with religious tradition and the desire to find his own way in the world.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Georgia Beaverson
Freelance Writer
Madison, Wisconsin

Nye, Julie. *In My Uncle's House*. Illustrated by Stephanie True. Bob Jones University Press, 1986. ISBN 089084349X. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 5 - 8.

Travis McLaren is an angry young man. Why did God let his parents die in the small but vicious tornado in Merlana Gap, a small farm town at the base of the Smokey Mountains? And why must he and his sisters be forced to leave their ranch to live with their mean-spirited, double-dealing uncle? And most of all, why does his sister Laurie seem to have such peace and confidence that the Lord will "work all things together for good," in spite of all the trials they face?

Fifteen-year-old Travis struggles with these issues in Julie Nye's book *In My Uncle's House*. He desperately wants to stay on his family's ranch and keep raising cattle and working the land, but since his Uncle Shelver has custody of Travis and his sisters, they are forced to sell the ranch to pay off the mortgage debts. Travis leaves behind all that is dear to him, including his mare, Winsome. He and his sisters face a new life at Chellavue, the old manor house of a cotton plantation. Here life is vastly different from what they are used to—a house the size of a small hotel, formal meals served every evening, a life of luxury instead of the hard physical work required on the ranch, and new schoolmates to adjust to at Sweetoak Academy.

Chellavue is home to several prize-winning horses, shown and jumped by Travis' Aunt Shelver. Homesick for the ranch, Travis, spends his spare time helping the stableman with the horses. Travis falls in love with a powerful chestnut horse, Flame, but is forbidden to ride him, since the horse is Aunt Shelver's. Travis' sisters adjust well to their new surroundings, but Travis chafes at the change, has difficulty making friends at school, and holds Uncle Shelver personally responsible for his miserable life at Chellavue.

When Travis overhears a conversation between his Uncle Shelver and a lawyer, it confirms what Travis suspected all along—that his uncle is using the profit from the sale of the ranch for his own benefit. Travis' family had already been estranged from the Shelves for years because of their opposition to his mother and father's Christian faith. Uncle Shelver's underhanded dealings only give Travis one more reason to despise him, to speak rudely to him, and to fight him at every turn. When Travis tells Laurie of Uncle Shelver's plans, she takes it in stride and insists that since there is nothing they can do

about the situation, they must simply trust the Lord to work things out for them. She encourages Travis to pray about it, but he is too angry. Having been raised in a Christian home, Travis knows that his father would never approve of his poor attitude, but Travis is past caring.

Angry at God, bitter toward his uncle, and unhappy living at Chellavue, Travis quits going to church. The one time he does agree to attend, God speaks to Travis' heart and convicts him of his wrong attitude and behavior. However, his heart is so embittered that he rejects God's call. He takes his frustration out on a late-night ride with the forbidden horse Flame, who stumbles in the dark and injures his leg only days before Aunt Shelver is to take Flame to a horse show.

At his wits end, Uncle Shelver decides to send Travis away to a military academy. Finding little sympathy for his bad attitude and behavior from his sister Laurie, Travis seeks refuge in a quiet place, and finds himself at the church. The pastor discovers him there, and through his gentle guidance, Travis realizes he has never really committed his life to the Lord. When he turns his anger and bitterness over to God, he feels a load has been lifted from him. He returns to apologize to his aunt and uncle, who are surprisingly receptive to his change of attitude, and the healing of their relationship begins. In fact, the Shelves are so impressed by the change in Travis, they agree to go to church with him, just to find out more about who God really is.

Readers will relate with Travis' spiritual struggles as he tries to make sense of some very difficult issues in his life. *In My Uncle's House* will especially appeal to non-Christians who are interested in the things of the Lord, and to those raised in Christian homes who struggle with the reality of their faith. Nye's book emphasizes the importance of having a personal relationship with the Lord, and the necessity of trusting God completely, even when things don't seem to make sense. The story is interspersed with the full-page black and white illustrations of Stephanie True, which younger readers will appreciate.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Sherri Beeler
Teacher, Cascade Christian High School
Medford, Oregon

Pearl, Jane. *Homeward the Seeking Heart*. ISBN 0800753747. (Orphan Train West; 1).

—*Quest for Lasting Love*. ISBN 0800753720. (Orphan Train West; 2).

—*The Heart's Lonely Secret*. ISBN 0800755421. (Orphan Train West; 3).

Fleming H. Revell, 1990-4. Paperbound, \$7.99. Gr. 6 - Adult.

Homeward the Seeking Heart is the first of Pearl's Orphan Train Trilogy. In this novel, she skillfully weaves facts around the tale of orphan,

Zephronia Victorine Todd, who is abandoned by her actress mother at Greystone Orphanage near Boston, Massachusetts.

Toddy is only five years old when her mother abandons her to seek acting work in Europe. Her father, John Todd, isn't part of her life. He hasn't been seen or heard from since shortly after Toddy was born. When Toddy arrives at the orphanage, she quickly becomes popular with the caretakers as well as the other orphans at Greystone. Blessed with an outgoing personality and quick wit, she soon makes her first real friend, a young and serious girl, Kit Ternan. Even though Kit and Toddy are completely opposite in nature, they make a vow to stay friends no matter what happens in their lives.

Kit and Toddy, along with a third friend, Laurel Vestal, soon board the Orphan Train together and head West in search of families willing to adopt them. Toddy is adopted by Octavia Hale, a rich widow who is looking for a live-in companion for her granddaughter, Helene.

The plot twists and turns in this captivating novel of Toddy's life. Teens and adults alike will love this heartwarming adventure with nonstop action.

Quest for Lasting Love

Jane Peart strikes the hearts of readers in *Quest for Lasting Love*, the second of the Orphan Train West series. In this engrossing novel, readers follow the life of young Laurel Vestal. Laurel is brought to Greystone Orphanage by her gravely ill mother who can no longer care for her. Her father, whom she doesn't even remember, was killed years earlier in a tragic accident when he was knocked down by a team of runaway horses.

During her first weeks at the orphanage, Laurel anticipates the return of her mother, who promised to come back for her as soon as she recovered from her illness. Within the first few pages of the book, however, Laurel receives word that her mother has died in the sanatorium, leaving her at the mercy of the overcrowded and bleak institution.

Laurel's story continues as she and two other orphaned friends, Toddy and Kit, board the Orphan Train and head West in search of families willing to adopt them. The three young ladies promise to remain friends forever, even though they are separated by their adoptions. Laurel is adopted by Doctor and Mrs. Woodward, still grieving parents who lost their only daughter two years before Laurel arrives.

This historical romance is captivating reading, and the plot moves quickly though Laurel's life, her quest to find her true identity, and her marriage. Though it is the second in the Orphan Train series, Peart does not leave readers with a sense of having missed relevant details from the first book.

Readers of all ages will love Laurel and be spellbound by the difficulties this young woman

endures. This novel is a quick read for adults, a terrific story for teens, and would be an excellent read aloud in a classroom.

The Heart's Lonely Secret

Jane Peart's *The Heart's Lonely Secret* is another volume in her Orphan Train West series. This story focuses on orphan Ivy Austin who lives in the dismal and overcrowded Greystone Orphanage outside Boston, Massachusetts. Ivy's parents die and, at the tender age of five, she has been thrust from the warm and loving atmosphere of her home into the institutionalized world of an orphanage. Readers follow Ivy's harrowing and short-lived adoption by a circus family who is determined to train her to be an equestrian performer. Since this family considers her nothing more than an addition to their circus act, once she's injured in a stunt, the Tarantinos abandon her while she is still recovering in St. Luke's Hospital. During the days of Ivy's recovery, hospital officials begin making plans to send her back to the orphanage. Nurse Halloran, however, intervenes on her behalf, and finds a place for her aboard the Orphan Train, Ivy's only hope of escaping the dismal existence in the orphanage. Once aboard the Train, Ivy finds her first real friend, Allison. The two become friends for not only their journey West, but also for the rest of their lives.

Peart spins another captivating tale in a historical setting. The plot moves quickly and although the ending is predictable, it's a book readers won't be able to put down.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Karen Orfitelli
Freelance Writer/Teacher, Cornerstone Christian School
Manchester, Connecticut

Richards, David. *Soldier Boys. Thistledown Press, c1993. ISBN 1895449065. Paperbound, \$7.95. Gr. 7 - Adult.*

The time is 1885; the place, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Captain Lashbrooke, commander of the G Company of the Winnipeg Rifles, is in need of a company bugler, and Tom Kerslake, a boy of thirteen, has decided that he is the right man for the job. Much to his surprise, Captain Lashbrooke agrees.

As Tom embarks on a military career, Luc Goyette is attending Sunday Mass with his family in the Metis community of Batoche, Saskatchewan. The calm of the service is shattered by Louis Riel, who is outraged over the priest's blatant pro-government preaching. Riel, who sees himself as a prophet to the Metis nation, soon becomes a rallying point for the disillusioned among his people.

Soldier Boys, a novel written by David Richards, is both well-researched history and a riveting story. The writing style is clean and uncluttered, and the author excels at showing, rather than telling. The plot unfolds smoothly. It is the

element of characterization, however, that is central. Richards introduces his reader to a large but likable cast of characters, ranging from the wholly imaginary to the historically significant. Through the two main characters, Tom and Luc, Richards explores the richness of the Metis and pioneer cultures of the time. Canada as a nation is still taking shape, and these two young men, with their dreams of the glories of war, are quickly caught up in the events that future generations will remember as the Riel Rebellion.

The storylines of these two characters are developed independently until the author brings them together in a climactic moment: "He aimed, bullets cracked through the air around him and smacked into the logs. The horn shrieked and Pierre called out for him to run. He didn't care. He felt no fear, only cold hate. He would get the trumpet. Even as he pulled the trigger, a thought flashed through his mind: 'The horn blowers are boys, like me!'"

Although the battle scenes are realistically depicted, the author does not glorify violence, nor does he dwell on it. He is more interested in the minds and hearts of his central characters as they struggle to define themselves and their world.

The book includes two maps of the battlefield, a glossary of French and Cree expressions used by the various characters, and an epilogue which summarizes the factual events upon which the novel is based.

There is one occasion during the battle where Luc's Cree comrade yells, "Jesus, Mary and Joseph!" But later, Luc ponders the fact that in the heat of battle, his non-Christian friend calls on Jesus. In this way, the one potentially problematic incident in the entire novel becomes food for thought. It is also completely in keeping with both the character and the events.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Sylvia Stopforth
 Librarian, Trinity Western University
 Langley, British Columbia, Canada

Snelling, Lauraine. *Setting the Pace. (High Hurdles; 3). Bethany House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1556615078. Paperbound, \$5.99. Gr. 5 - 8.*

DJ, short for Darla Jean, sets out to execute a plan to prevent a major change in her life. Robert, her mother's boyfriend, has proposed marriage. DJ and her mom have gotten along just fine by themselves and their lives will become chaotic if her mother accepts, because along with Robert come his young twin sons, the Double B's.

To make matters in her life worse, DJ hears trouble brewing at the Briones Riding Academy where she stables her horse and works after school. Tony, a sullen teenage boy, has been hurling racial slurs at her black friend Hilary. If

attitudes don't improve, Hilary plans to quietly look for a stables elsewhere. DJ passes the word around to the other young workers to ignore Tony as much as possible, hoping to force him to quit the riding academy instead of Hilary.

Both of DJ's plans begin to unravel when scriptures pop unbidden into her mind along with her grandparent's advice as to how to handle these situations; to pray about it and see what God has to say. Soon DJ finds her own outlook changing about having a new father and instant brothers. Changes also come regarding Tony after a riding accident happens just before a major horse show.

This is the third book in the High Hurdles series by Lauraine Snelling, author of the Golden Filly Series. The book reads well out of sequence, though there are a few times when incidents are referred to in one of the previous books. This story will have the most appeal to young girls who love horses and must face changes that come about from having a stepparent enter their life. Racial tensions and how to best deal with them in a Christian way are part of the fabric of the plot. A racial slur used once but the attitude displayed by the recipient of the slur is one of patience and kindness in return which overcomes bitter feelings in the end.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Debbie Lindsay

Homeschool Parent

Eatonville, Washington

Walsh, Ann. *Moses, Me and Murder.* Illustrated by Cathie Allen. Pacific Educational Press, University of British Columbia, 1988. ISBN 0888650590. Paperbound, \$8.95. Gr. 6 - 9.

"Me" in the title is Theodore Percival MacIntosh, twelve years old. Wellington Delaney Moses, the small, black barber in Barkerville, British Columbia, just goes by "Moses." This story takes place in Canada in 1866 during the Cariboo Gold Rush in and around Williams Creek. The story of the murder of Charles Morgan Blessing, a friend of Moses' and James Barry, the accused and pursued murderer is fiction based in fact. The author has used the real names of all the characters involved with the exception of Ted, the young hero in the story. Ted has to get involved in identifying the murderer when Moses' heart acts up and keeps him from the four-day stage ride to catch Barry as he crosses the 300-foot Alexandra suspension bridge over the Fraser River. The author professes in her end notes that she isn't sure that an innocent man went to the gallows for the murder of Blessing. The reader gets to decide what he thinks. The characters are genuine, and the story moves along quickly. Boys should enjoy it.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Helen Hunter

Author/Freelance Writer

Cedar Rapids, Iowa

***Why Papa Went Away and Other Stories.* Edited by Phyllis Martens. Kindred Press, 1988. ISBN 0919797458. Paperbound, \$4.95. Gr. 6 - 9.**

Why Papa Went Away and Other Stories is a collection of stories about the Mennonite Brethren people, their faith, and their heritage. The first story is set in Russia in the mid-1800's and tells the life of Abraham Schellenberg, a leader in the Mennonite Brethren Church. It tells of his decision to accept Jesus as savior and join the church in spite of possible persecution, and how he was used by the Lord, first in Russia and then in the United States. *Why Papa Went Away* is told from the son's point of view, and though he embraced his father's faith and grew to appreciate all that his father had done for the church, it clearly shows how Johann Claassen, the founder of the Mennonite Brethren Church, sacrificed his family for the cause of the church.

"Over Land and Sea to Freedom" is a story about the Jacob Wiebe family and many other families who moved from Russia to Hillsboro, Kansas in 1874 to find religious freedom. It is a well-written story showing the move through the eyes of their daughter, Katherina.

"The Man Who Stopped Fights" is a story about Peter Friesen, an educated Russian man who served as a mediator between the Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren churches, as well as representing these churches before the Russian government.

The last story, "A Gift of Flour," tells of Abraham Unruh, centering around a time in his life when the Mennonite Central Committee brought flour to the hungry people of Russia in the 1920's.

Each story includes lackluster sketches and ends with brief biographical notes. *Why Papa Went Away* and other stories tells the stories of five Mennonite Brethren Church leaders, but is frustratingly uninspiring.

u Quality - 2 § Acceptability - 5

Barbara Beyer

International Ministries, ACSI

Colorado Springs, Colorado

Yates, Elizabeth. *Hue & Cry.* Edited by Gloria Repp. Bob Jones University Press, c1991. ISBN 0890845360. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 6 - 10.

Hue & Cry was the name of a mutual protection society in early 1800's New Hampshire. They were a voluntary network of individuals who were summoned when someone had been robbed, particularly of livestock. Jared Austin and his two sons, Rufus and Benoni, are called

out in the late summer of 1836 to pursue Blue Lightning, a dapple-gray horse stolen from Captain Isaac Mallow of Portsmouth. It isn't the men of the township, though, who discover the whereabouts of the handsome stallion and the young Irish boy who has stolen him. Melody Austin, young, bright, and totally deaf, befriends the errant youth, and her whole family must decide what they will do: turn him in to the sheriff, or reach out to the hungry pleading look in his haunted, honest eyes. It's Melody's first spoken word, "Dan," that helps them decide to grant the lad their hearth and heart for a brief piece of time.

Hue & Cry, written by Elizabeth Yates, is a wonderful historical fiction story of love and trust set during the early pages of our country's existence. The simplicity of rural New England, the communion and cooperation of both families and communities, as well as the stark pain and misery of the Irish famine and the raw treatment of the desperate emigrants are all carefully portrayed in this gentle story. A young girl's handicap and a young boy's poor choices are overcome by friendship and trust. The gospel, though not spelled out specifically, is gently woven into the fabric of the story as the Austin family lives out their faith in God in a day to day fashion.

Hue & Cry is a sequel to Elizabeth Yates earlier work, *The Journeyman*, and it is a continuation of the story of the Austin family. She has authored sixteen other novels, as well as fifteen non-fiction works. Her best known work is *Amos Fortune, Free Man*, which won her a Newbery Medal.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Gayle Chessman Haberman

Teacher, West Hills Christian School

Portland, Oregon

Yates, Elizabeth. *Sound Friendships : The Story of Willa and Her Hearing Dog.* Edited by Gloria Repp. Bob Jones University Press, 1992. ISBN 0890846502. Paperbound, \$6.49. Gr. 6 - Adult.

One doesn't hear and the other doesn't speak. Together they make a wonderful story. A story children and adults will both love as they come to understand others who may be different from themselves. Heart warming and informative, *Sound Friendships* chronicles the life of Willa who lost her hearing at age fourteen. Then at age twenty-four she learns about NEADS (New England Assistance Dog Service. From that moment her life is changed. The story is also Honey's. Honey is a Hearing Dog. Her devotion, faithfulness, and intelligence turn shy, lonely Willa into a confident spokesperson for Service Dogs.

Learn what it takes to train a Hearing Dog. Follow Honey's progress as she learns the necessary skills, like letting Willa know when someone's knocking or the tea kettle is boiling.

This Golden Retriever will steal your heart. A good story for parents and young children to read together.

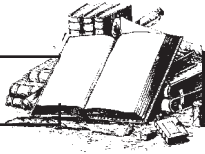
u Quality - 4

§ Acceptability - 5

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Carter, Betty Smartt. *I Read It in the Wordless Book*. Baker Books, 1996. ISBN 080105558X. Paperbound, \$13.99. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Set in a tiny Virginia town in the 1970's, *I Read It in the Wordless Book* tells the coming-of-age story of Carrie Grietkirk. Carrie's mother is dead and, as the novel opens, her missionary father returns from Vietnam, where he has spent most of Carrie's life. Her paternal grandmother, a fiercely pious member of the Dutch First Reformed Church of Dutch Falls, has raised twelve-year-old Carrie.

Her father's return triggers (or coincides with?) the beginning of teenage rebellion within Carrie. Her father brings with him a new Vietnamese bride, Phuong, so his homecoming is complicated by all the problems of a new step-family and cross-cultural relationships. Carrie begins to pull aside her veil of innocence to see that adult lives—and life in general—are complicated. Religion, sex, unhappiness, sin, doubt, frustration, and addiction all march before Carrie's newly-opened eyes that summer of her father's return. *I Read It in the Wordless Book* is more than a coming-of-age novel. It's also the portrait of a town.

Betty Smartt Carter has written an intelligent, sensitive first novel. The back cover blurb draws a likeness between this novel and Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. While the two are similar in many respects, *Wordless Book* does not have the social resonance of Miss Lee's novel. But that doesn't mean it isn't a worthwhile read; it is.

The number of characters to keep track of might make it difficult for younger readers. References to drunkenness, sexual promiscuity, and some mild swearing shouldn't interfere with the novel's worth and insights.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Georgia Beaverson
Freelance Writer
Madison, Wisconsin

Caught. Broadman & Holman, 1987. ISBN 1564080161. Videocassette, \$19.99. Gr. 10 - Adult.

Tim Devon's life is changed forever when he discovers a dark secret from his past. His search for answers takes him to the City of Amsterdam, where his quest is soon buried by danger and death. Friendless, penniless, Tim soon becomes a slave to the drug dealer he pushes for...and to

the drugs themselves. His life is taking a downward spiral. Then he meets a single caring person whose unexpected kindness begins to melt Tim's hardened heart. Rajam Prasad, an evangelist from India, is totally committed to serving God and helping others. With Rajam at his side, Tim overcomes his many obstacles and finally finds true peace...while leaning against a garbage dumpster.

Tim came to Holland seeking his earthly father, but ignoring his heavenly Father. He left Holland having found both...and a special friend whom he would never forget.

Although Tim Devon is an interesting character, John Shepherd's acting is mediocre: Tim's personality is never really developed. Amerjit Deu, on the other hand, plays the lovable Rajam Prasad to perfection. Deu fully portrays Rajam's amazing patience, growing faith, and eagerness to share the Gospel. Without Rajam Prasad—and, very likely, Amerjit Deu's expert acting—*Caught* just wouldn't work. After an exciting introduction, the pace is rather slow until Rajam comes on the scene.

James F. Collier has directed a touching movie that explores the darkness of human spirit and the glorious light of God's love. The beautiful theme song, "Let Your Love Lift Me Up Again," is an excellent finishing touch. Although *Caught* contains some graphic drug use, PG-13 is probably too strong a rating.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Tara A. Sigler
Freelance Writer
Walker, Iowa

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Edwards, Gene. *The Triumph*. (The Chronicles of the Door; 4). Tyndale House Publishers. ISBN 0842369783. Paperbound, \$8.99. HS - Adult

Michael, the Archangel, is absolutely beside himself with concern as he watches events that are taking place on earth. He can hardly restrain himself from going through the door of his heavenly realm to that of earth in an all out effort to stop things. His Master, whom he has known and served from the beginning, is apparently about to be hurt—no, not just hurt, but crucified—by sinful man; and Michael does not understand why. Rathel, Gabriel, and Recorder, other high ranking angels of the Most High's host

are extremely worried about what Michael might do. All of heaven is waiting for his direction, but the Master, Jesus, has not, for reasons they can not comprehend, summoned them. They can only wait and watch.

Then Recorder takes Michael to a place where they are allowed a brief viewing of the whole panorama of history, or time as we know it. From the beginning even before God created the heavens and the earth, to the end when he calls his chosen ones home and makes all things new, they see that God was not alone. The Master, Jesus, was there in the beginning, and he was there in the end. And somehow, for some unknown reason, the cross had to take place to make all things complete. It is enough to give Michael the peace he needs to wait and see how things transpire.

The Triumph, by Gene Edwards, is an amazing story of insight into the crucifixion through the eyes of the angels who had loved and served Jesus from the beginning and did not comprehend why he had to die on Golgotha. It is a book alive with emotion that keeps you transfixed and poised waiting with the heavenly host. One moment I found myself, with Michael and Gabriel, crying, "No! No! Don't allow this thing to happen!" And the next I wanted to reassure the angels from my 20th Century vantage point, "It's okay! It's okay!" Never has the crucifixion been brought to such light or revelation for me as through the pages of this book, the fourth in a series of books called *The Chronicles of the Door*. I want to go back and read *The Beginning*, *The Escape*, and *The Birth*, and view these events, too, through heaven's eyes. I was moved by the drama on earth as it was revealed through vision that had seen all things and yet was veiled from all of the why's and how's, even as our vision is veiled. The panoramic picture of all history was especially encouraging and exciting.

The Triumph is a book that is deep and written in almost poetic style in places. Its language is simple and direct, but much of its material is very thought provoking, even difficult to totally grasp. It is a book that a person could read over and over to capture deeper levels of meaning and understanding. Obviously speculative in nature, still it is accurate in its account of the things of heaven from a biblical perspective. The liberties it takes into the lives and thoughts of angels are not out of line.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Gayle Chessman Haberman
Teacher, West Hills Christian School
Portland, Oregon

Funderburk, Robert. *Old Familiar Places.* (The Innocent Years; 4). Bethany House, 1996. ISBN 1556614632. Paperbound, \$8.99. Gr. 10 - Adult.

Old Familiar Places, Robert Funderburk's fourth book in *The Innocent Years*, is set in the time of the rise of Elvis Presley's fame. The heroine of the book, Jessie Temple, quits college to follow the dream of a singing career. She moves to Memphis in search of stardom, only to end up as a waitress in an insignificant eating joint. Her path crosses that of Billy Pilgrim, a street preacher, and she accompanies him in his rise to popularity as an evangelist.

Uncertain what she truly is seeking, Jessie ignores the pleas of her hometown boyfriend to return home, and continues to travel with Billy, unsure of her growing feelings for him. Her world comes crashing to a halt when she is told of Billy's death in a one-car accident.

This well-written story of Southern life in the fifties captures the nostalgia of life at that time and continues to ask the old questions on the purpose of life. It appeals to a wide audience as the lives of Jessie's younger brother and sister are intertwined throughout the story and their facing issues such as dealing with terminal illness and making choices to go against the values of a moral, Christian family in the conservative South.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Esther Knaupp
Librarian, Santiam Christian School
Corvallis, Oregon

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Herr, Ethel. *The Dove and the Rose.* (The Seekers; 1). Bethany House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1556617461. Paperbound, \$9.99. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Writer/historian Ethel Herr spins a tale well worth reading in the first book of her new series, *The Seekers*. Sixteenth-century Netherlands is the setting of this saga where two young people, Pieter-Lucas van den Garde and Aletta Engelshofen, fall in love and then must deal with a host of problems that are thrust into their lives.

Using the Renaissance and the Reformation as a backdrop for this story, Herr skillfully weaves fascinating historical details of the political and religious climates during this time with the fictional struggles of Pieter-Lucas and Aletta. Pieter, an artist and son of a Calvinist, grapples with bitterness when an extreme Calvinist sect, the Beggars, mistakenly imprisons him. Meanwhile, Aletta has secretly promised her love to him and vows to wait for him. The tension grows as these

two young people are torn apart by the discord of their parents.

Herr's extensive historical knowledge and accomplished skill as a writer merge to make this novel entertaining, educational and among the best Christian novels on the market. It contains a fascinating and believable plot, characters who are developed in depth, and a setting that is intriguingly unfamiliar. Once readers have finished this book, they will eagerly anticipate the next in the series.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Karen Orfitelli
Freelance Writer/Teacher, Cornerstone Christian School
Manchester, Connecticut

MacDonald, George. *The Shepherd's Castle.* Edited by Michael R. Phillips. Bethany House Publishers, 1983. ISBN 1556616333. Sm. Paperbound, \$5.99. ISBN 155661579X. Lg. Paperbound, \$8.99. Gr. 9 - Adult.

The Shepherds Castle, originally published as *Donal Grant* in 1883 is the sequel to *The Baronet's Song*, also by George MacDonald. Michael Phillips has edited the original to a format more suitable for today's readers; even so some passages may take several reads in order to glean the full import or intent from it. George MacDonald is considered a master storyteller whom many more famous writers than he accredit as inspiration early in their literary efforts. A young minister on the edge of religious society because of his strong anticalvinist views, MacDonald used his writings as a way to present a more loving and compassionate God.

Donal Grant is a young scholar and former sheep herder who is heading into the world, not to make his fortune, but to find work of purpose, and perhaps a supply of books to read. Written as a mystery, it is a gothic dark tale of extreme evil if we were to consider it a reality. A desperately wicked man is given a light characterization, leaving us to wonder how he came to do the things he did. Because MacDonald is using his writing as a tool he often speaks through his alter ego Donal (macDONALd) in such deep spiritual outbursts, that you aren't exactly sure what his full meaning is, or how to interpret his theology. MacDonald's very complex castle and using the diagram at the beginning of the book may help to sort things out somewhat, then again maybe not. The floor plan does serve to give away some of the plot and mystery. For example when they are looking for a secret room we already know there is one and an idea of what they will find there.

The book is interesting to read for the ageless theme, the love and forgiveness of God. MacDonald puts his very heart into his books striving to introduce God to just one more reader.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Jannet Hoeffner
Freelance Writer
Prairie City, Oregon

Maier, Paul L. *Pontius Pilate.* Kregel Publications, 1990. ISBN 0825432960. Paperbound, \$10.99. Adult.

Based on the few historical facts available about Pontius Pilate and historical records about his contemporaries, this novel covers Pilate's rise from soldier to Prefect of Palestine to his retirement. At the heart of the novel is Pilate's decision to sentence Jesus of Nazareth to be crucified at the request of the Sanhedrin. Pilate has often been presented as a villain, but this portrayal provides a different view by showing how Pilate came to be in Palestine, his previous interactions with the Jewish leadership, and the pressure he may have faced from Rome.

Paul L. Maier presents believable characters and guides the reader through the complicated web of Roman politics. Some readers may find occasional anachronisms, such as references to genetics or male pattern baldness, distracting. I recommend this novel, but advise readers to keep in mind that this is largely fictionalized. A historical note and bibliographical references of historical sources are provided.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Karla J. Kessell
Academic Librarian, Mount Vernon Nazarene College
Mount Vernon, Ohio

*

Maier, Paul L. *The Flames of Rome.* Kregel Publications, 1991. ISBN 0825432979. Paperbound, \$10.99. Adult

In *The Flames of Rome*, Paul Maier has accomplished a tremendously challenging project, and he has done so with wonderful clarity and accuracy. This book is really the story of the First Century Church, but written from the perspective of Rome and what was going on during the end of Claudias's and the whole of Nero's realms. It centers mostly around the family of Flavius Sabinus, who was mayor of Rome at the time of Nero. Flavius, and a few of his associates who were either senators or among the nobility of the time, were really the last of a dying breed. They were men of integrity and honor; and what Nero brought to Rome, particularly to the fledgling Christian Church, caused them great despair and grief. In fact, it cost some of them their lives. Some of them were the converts to Christianity that Paul described in his prison epistles as "Caesar's household."

The Flames of Rome was, for me, an almost difficult book to read. I couldn't put it down, and yet there were places where it was so descriptive and real that it was painful to absorb. The persecution of the Christians, the assassinations

of inconvenient, dangerous, and often innocent relatives and friends, and the sensual lust and perverted excess of many of the people, even though handled as carefully as possible, were still difficult to read. Nero was a horrible man, and everything around him was stained by his incredible sin. In addressing the issue of the lurid nature of his work, Paul Maier commented in his preface that because some scenes were so crucial to the story of the first church, it would be dishonest to omit them.

This book is more than just an historical fiction work. It is what Mr. Maier describes as a "documentary novel." It is as accurate as a book can possibly be dealing with a period of history where we have little concrete written corroboration. Mr. Maier researched and documented his work thoroughly with twenty five pages of footnotes. He used three ground rules in writing the book that I found really added to the intrigue of the story. All people mentioned in the book were accurate and called by their true names if possible. No personality or event contradicts known historical fact. And, finally, in those areas where the author had to "construct" his own story, it was done so according to probability and was footnoted carefully. It was fascinating to read the story and then flip to the notes and realize just how accurate and on track it was. I felt like I really met Paul and Peter, Aquilla and Priscilla, and even Nero. In a way, it was like traveling in time and viewing the birth of the Christian Church.

Though carefully written and accurately documented, this book is not for everyone. It definitely requires a mature audience. Sex and violence were a very real part of First Century Rome, and though handled well, they could not be avoided altogether. As the author himself put it, that would be dishonest.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 4

Gayle Chessman Haberman
Teacher, West Hills Christian School
Portland, Oregon

Morris, Alan. *By Honor Bound.* (Guardians of the North; 1). Bethany House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1556616929. Paperbound, \$8.99. Gr. 10 - Adult.

Reena O'Donnell, a striking darkhaired beauty, chooses to leave her social position and wealth in Chicago, to answer the call of God to be a missionary on the Canadian frontier. A vivid dream, coupled with the potent message from Reverend D. L. Moody, work together to confirm in Reena's heart what she must do. Though filled with a mixture of excitement and trepidation, she sets off with her uncle to share her faith with the Assiniboine Indian tribe.

In the midst of this wilderness, another call is being made on a young farmer, Hunter Stone. His once peaceful lifestyle has been drastically changed by the kidnapping and death of his

beloved wife, Betsy, by a renegade Crow Indian, Red Wolf. Being consumed with hatred, Hunter vows to track him down and kill him for revenge. But the attempt is thwarted by the cunning Indian and Hunter is almost killed. Reena finds Hunter seriously wounded and dying. Her gentle care helps nurse him back to health, but will this all-consuming hate destroy him after all? Hunter finally joins the newly formed Canadian Royal Mounted Police, and seems to be gaining a measure of control when another strike by Red Wolf, this time against Reena, threatens to undo all the good that has been established in Hunter's life.

Alan Morris makes a solid hit with his first solo novel, *By Honor Bound*. Having co-authored several books with his well-known writer/father, Gilbert Morris, the younger Morris has the background and experience to weave a suspenseful, touching story that will fill the reader with anticipation.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Mary McKinney
Freelance Writer
Port Orchard, Washington

Morris, Gilbert. *Lone Wolf.* (Reno Western Saga; 6). Tyndale House Publishers, 1995. ISBN 0842319972. Paperbound, \$9.99. Gr. 10 - Adult.

The once land-hungry Simon Meade, now confined to a wheelchair because of a gunshot wound, was learning what the word 'humble' meant. Being used to bossing everyone around and running the show, he now had to rely heavily on others for help. When the biggest need in his life, and most important to him—the recovery of his kidnapped son from the Sioux Indians—becomes a possibility, he finds that he is incapable of taking action.

In desperation, Meade finally asks Jim Reno, his once hated neighbor, to help out. His son, Jason Meade, had grown up in the Indian camps, and had learned the Indian ways. When spotted by a fur trader, the young man with the piercing blue eyes had definitely become an integral part of the tribe. Jim knows that to even try to get into the Indian camp would be risky, let alone confront and convince the Meade boy that he needs to leave all he knows and rejoin the hated white man. But a twist of fate, where his entire Indian camp is wiped out by the pony soldiers, gives the young man no option but to start his life fresh as a white man. This outsider with his strange Indian ways must now face harsh prejudice and challenges as he attempts to become a part of the white man's culture.

Gilbert Morris speaks to the dilemma of changing one's identity with frankness yet understanding. The characters are full and caring and Morris draws the reader into the challenges presented with skill and sensitivity. *Lone Wolf* is a notch above the typical western as the storyline

can parallel the challenges a new believer must face as they also must set aside the old man and put on the new. This is an interesting and touching story that is a delight to read.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Mary McKinney
Freelance Writer
Port Orchard, Washington

Morris, Gilbert. *The Iron Lady.* (The House of Winslow; 19). Bethany House Publishers, c1996. ISBN 1556616872. Paperbound, \$9.99. Adult.

Three Winslow cousins, Ruth, Priscilla, and Esther, meet together in bustling New York City at the turn of the century. Each possesses a unique charm, beauty, and talent, that helps to open doors of opportunity—but not every open door is desirable or proper for a young lady to pursue.

Charmed with the idea of moving away from the Wyoming ranch, Priscilla joins her cousin Ruth in becoming nurses-in-training at Baxter Hospital. Ruth immediately takes to the rigorous routine and finds that working with the sick is very fulfilling as well as helpful in enabling her to gain experience to become a missionary in Africa—her heart's desire. Dr. David Burns, a most compassionate and caring physician, adds a thread of interest to the job as Ruth pours herself into her work.

But Priscilla hates the hard work at the hospital, being star-struck by the lure of the theater. She finally is able to procure a part in a musical and finds great success—her dream come true. Unfortunately, not all is glitter in the world of acting, and Priscilla finds compromise and deception a most difficult role to deal with.

Esther Winslow feels like a worthless ornament in the rich surroundings her father has provided by becoming the vice president of the Union Pacific Railroad. When challenged by her father, she finally chooses to pursue what she has always enjoyed—photography. But she doesn't just want to take pretty pictures, she desires to capture the emotions and mood of those she photographs. Her boldness and tenacity eventually gain her the title "Iron Lady" as she is able to expose injustices and the devastating plight of the poor immigrants trying to survive in the New York slums.

Gilbert Morris weaves an interesting tale as he ensues the lives of these three cousins through the intricate web of the socioeconomic system of 1902. The reader will discover interesting and pertinent historical facts as well as enjoy the intriguing lives of this trio of Winslows. *The Iron Lady* is a clever title, not only portraying Esther Winslow's ability to break into the mostly man-ruled world of journalism, but it aptly portrays America's open door policy to the many immigrants that flee to America and gaze gratefully at the Iron Lady, the Statue of Liberty,

as they enter at Ellis Island full of hopes and dreams for a successful future.

u Quality - 4 Acceptability - 5

Mary McKinney
Freelance Writer
Port Orchard, Washington

Morris, Gilbert. *Valley Justice.* (Reno Western Saga; 5). Tyndale House Publishers, 1995. ISBN 0842377565. Paperbound, \$9.99. Gr. 10 - Adult.

Jim Reno has faced plenty of tough situations. His mining for gold required a lot of danger, hard work and luck, but he and his two partners, Easy Jones and fourteen-year-old Lee Morgan, had managed to stick it out, with no small amount of success.

But now he was being asked a great favor by a dying friend and ex-commander in the army. It was no small task, to care for the family Major Reynolds would be leaving behind and help them get established out West. The challenge to toughen up refined, citified society people was a difficult task, and yet a greater test still faced them—to reclaim the family ranch in Wyoming from established ranchers that could be ruthless and unforgiving. Ripen graze land was one thing, but convincing the ranchers that their cattle needed to stay off the Sun Ranch's land, which they had been accustomed to using for years, creates some real enemies.

Young Chris Reynolds, seventeen, takes the responsibility to heart and begins to grow and mature in a way that his easy life in the big city had not required. Ramona, his sister, is a bit more feisty, resenting Reno's help, yet realizing that the family could never survive without him. But her haughty attitude only promises heartache and confusion. Can Mona change and understand that life out West, as a necessity for survival, must sometimes allow for unrefined methods to solutions?

Cattle rustling, gun fights, and ambushes promise an interesting frontier novel. Gilbert Morris has a good handle on the lingo and tough living conditions that faced the early ranchers as they tried to establish homesteads out west. The salvation message is a bit preachy, confined to a five page dialogue between the family cook, Deacon, and beautiful Belle Montez, a mail order bride with a dubious past. All in all, the storyline is fairly typical with the rich, obsessive rancher threatening the "small guy" with a complete take-over. Yet *Valley Justice* is still an entertaining read for the western lover.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Mary McKinney
Freelance Writer
Port Orchard, Washington

Power Play. Broadman & Holman, 1994. ISBN 1564081680. Videocassette, \$19.99. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Using the setting of a National League hockey team and a cut-throat business environment, Broadman & Holman and World Wide Pictures do a stunning job of presenting the age-old message of salvation in a modern setting. When attorney Robbie Steele seeks to recruit Cody Harris, retired hockey star, as her final hope for making a go of the struggling pro team, she does not count on the fact that he has cleaned up his act and become a Christian.

In a world of political moves and dishonest manoeuvres, the self-sufficient Robbie comes to the end of herself and comes face to face with the importance of honesty and loyalty. She is touched by the message she hears at the Billy Graham Crusade, and begins to see herself as she really is. With the help of Cody, she makes some decisions that will change her life forever.

This sixty-minute video is fast-moving and suspenseful, leaving questions in the viewer's mind until the end. It gives lots of openings for discussion with teens in today's world of mixed up morals and standards.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Esther Knaupp
Librarian, Santiam Christian School
Corvallis, Oregon

The Prodigal. Broadman & Holman, 1983. ISBN 1564080323. Videocassette, \$19.99. Gr. 10 - Adult.

"How long has our wandering son been gone this time?" Greg has always been the rebel of the Stuart family. While his brother Scott studies dutifully at a seminary, Greg prefers slipping away to his island hideaway for months at a time. He finally settles down and gets a job, only to be lured away by empty promises and superficial friends. Greg's parents, worried and confused, are drifting apart. Scott is constantly frustrated as he struggles to help his wayward brother. Greg's selfish actions are tearing the Stuart family apart.

But when a crazy get-rich-quick scheme goes awry, Greg is abandoned by his 'friends' and his career is shot. For the first time, he realizes how empty his life is. With the realization comes a desire to know the Lord. Greg accepts Christ and commits his life to God. Now, at long last, the Stuart family can begin the process of rebuilding a shattered home.

John Hammond's portrayal of Greg was convincing and realistic. The other actors failed to develop their characters. The pace is slow, the plot is obscure, the message is unclear. *The Prodigal* has absolutely no action whatsoever. It's strictly a character plot—most unfortunate, since most of the characters are so dull.

I've seen James F. Collier, writer and director, do much better than this. Probably the best thing

about *The Prodigal* was the theme song, "I Have Today," sung by B.J. Thomas. The song's pure melody and uplifting lyrics convey what the movie could not: no matter what you do, Jesus still loves you and can transform your life. Yesterday may be a nightmare of broken dreams; but you still have today.

u Quality - 2 § Acceptability - 4

Tara A. Sigler
Freelance Writer
Walker, Iowa

Riols, Noreen. *Before the Dawn.* (The House of Annabae; 3). Crossway Books, 1996. ISBN 089107872X. Paperbound, \$10.99. Gr. 11 - Adult.

This third book in the House of Annabae by Noreen Riols, *Before the Dawn*, continues the story of Katharine and her husband Maxime and their children. After facing the deaths of her mother and first husband and surviving the trauma's of wartime, Katharine feels that her life is starting to make a turnaround. The physical limitations of her latest child and the return of her husband's ex-wife seem to take Katharine past the breaking point. Added to this, her father is kidnapped by terrorists in North Africa, a fact kept from her by her family who believe that would be the final breaking point.

Through the terrible fears and depression that Katharine faces, she is kept from total despair by her personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The seemingly unsurmountable misunderstandings with her husband begin to be cleared up, and through the pain they face, Maxime finally begins his own personal relationship with Christ, and the family peace is restored at last.

This very intensely emotional book does an excellent job at realistically portraying the thoughts and feelings of a severely depressed person which give hope to the one going through a similar circumstance and gives understanding to the one trying to help the one in depression.

Riols makes the characters and their circumstances totally believable, and puts in suspense and excitement to keep the reader interested.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Esther Knaupp
Librarian, Santiam Christian School
Corvallis, Oregon

Simon, Frank. *Veiled Threats.* Crossway Books, 1996. ISBN 0891078800. Paperbound, \$12.99. Gr. 10 - Adult.

Having its setting in the explosive land of Israel, *Veiled Threats* almost reads like the background to a current news story. Author Frank Simon weaves together several plots which all merge as the story comes to a climax.

The action opens with an attempted bombing at the Dome of the Rock which is stopped by Ya'acov Isaacson of the Military Intelligence and his men. The story then moves to an excavation site in Jerusalem that is being done by Moshe Stein of the Hebrew University, Dr. Anne McAdams, and student assistant Mars Enderly. They make a stunning discovery as they unearth a room filled with discarded treasures from the temple, the most exciting of all being the temple veil which had been ripped in half from the top to the bottom.

As the story progresses, the Palestinian Revolutionary Force (PRF) and other Arab groups begin working together in an effort to crush the Jews. The unsuspecting Anne McAdams becomes their pawn as she is kidnapped by the leaders of the PRF. In the meantime, Ann and Mars Enderly's relationship has gone beyond that of a professor and her student. While Mars frantically seeks to find Anne, she is reading the Bible that had been given to her by a Christian Jew.

This suspense-filled plot includes Mars Enderly's struggle in his relationship with his father and his developing friendship with Ann. For Ann, the conflict is between the evidence that they are uncovering in their dig and her doubts in the truth of the Bible. This inner conflict is intensified when Ann is abducted by terrorists. Her decision to follow Christ and still marry Mars, an unbeliever, may be a problem to some readers, although this is not the end of the story; the author's final words are "to be continued in an upcoming sequel."

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Esther Knaupp

*Librarian, Santiam Christian School
Corvallis, Oregon*

Walker, James. *The Desert Hawks.* (The Wells Fargo Trail; 5). Bethany House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1556617003. Paperbound, \$8.99. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Jim Walker's *The Desert Hawks* is his fifth in the Wells Fargo Trail series. Walker continues in his tradition of excellence as high drama and suspense surround the main character of the drama, Zachary Cobb, Wells Fargo undercover agent and bounty hunter.

Walker further develops Zachary Cobb's character and adds another element of excitement by bringing his long lost brother Julian into the story. Little did Zach dream that his assignment to track down the robber of the army payroll will lead him to his cruel and bitter one-eyed brother.

After capturing Julian and intending to bring him to justice, the brothers find themselves joining forces against a tribe of outraged and violent Indians who will stop at nothing to have their revenge on the white men. Zach is put in situations where he does not know how he will respond.

While this book may be read on its own, the reader who is following this dynamic series will see the development of character that is going on in Zach's life as he is forced to face the challenges of his past and face himself.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Esther Knaupp

*Librarian, Santiam Christian School
Corvallis, Oregon*

Wubbels, Lance. *Some Things Last Forever.* (The Gentle Hills; 4). Bethany House, 1996. ISBN 1556614217. Paperbound, \$9.99. Gr. 11 - Adult.

Jerry Macmillan gets the surprise of his life when Marjie passes him a note announcing that she is pregnant again right in the middle of their friends' wedding. But then life with Marjie is never dull. Margie loves horses and rides every chance she can, even though she lands face down in a snow drift. Jerry tries to slow Marjie down, but knows from experience how independent she is. Running a small farm isn't easy for Jerry and Marjie, but it is their life and one that they love. Marjie is active in the local church and leads a prayer band for family members off in the war. Life constantly pops up with difficult times, especially when some of their close friends choose to go into missionary work to Japan. The church is nearly split over the decision. Then they become aware of their own neighborhood that needs help and they become involved. Marjie's brother comes home from the war wounded. Then unexpectedly their local preacher dies and the church rallies to find another pastor. The situation becomes tense as the folk are divided over who the right one should be. A tempting offer is made by Jerry's brother to sell out and make big money. But Jerry and Margie realize that money isn't everything and they are right where they want to be.

Some Things Last Forever is full of action and dialog intermixed with incidents that keep the reader moving. It is set at the end of World War II and yet the reader will be able to identify with Jerry and Marjie and their struggles today. The book is very family oriented with close church ties. You will laugh and cry while reading along with Jerry and Marjie as they determine to do the right thing even when a situation blows up in their face. Their faith and trust is a challenge to everyone. Even through this is the fourth book in the series of *The Gentle Hills*, which continues with the life of the Macmillan family during the time of World War II, it is a story in itself that can stand alone.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Dorcas Walker

*Freelance Writer
Jamestown, Tennessee*

Move Baker ad to Adult Fiction, somewhe re in the middle.

Lindisfarne Legacy

(Continued from p. 12.)

Rev. Adam explained that for him, Celtic spirituality had benefited him as the way that had 'opened the gate of Glory,' and let him share in the 'glimpse of the Divine.' In its less formal approach he felt that it had liberated him to be himself.

I asked if he saw a problem in confusing Celtic Christianity with pre-Christian Celtic elements; confusing ecological concern with pantheism.

"Yes, there is much confusion of Celtic Christianity and New Age, and I see this as a danger. As for pantheism," he continued, "it is better to see God in all things than not to see him at all. If it encourages a sense of awe and gentleness towards all, all is better. But as the lesser cannot really contain the greater it is better to be a pan-entheist and to discern that all is in God. These are not mutually exclusive—it is we dwell in him and he in us. We are woven together (as is all of creation) in the Presence and Power of God."

'Woven together' is a phrase with which any Celtic saint could identify. In his meditations and prayers, David Adam seeks to weave together the past and present; the saints of old and the saints of today; the transcendence of God and His immanence; the legacy of the past and hope for the future.

*Thou art the peace of all things calm
Thou art the place to hide from harm
Thou art the light that shines in dark
Thou art the heart's eternal spark
Thou art the door that's open wide
Thou art the guest who waits inside
Thou art the stranger at the door
Thou art the calling of the poor
Thou art my Lord and with me still
Thou art my love, keep me from ill
Thou art the light, the truth, the way
Thou art my Saviour this very day.⁹*

I left Holy Island that night with the sense that I had come in contact with God in a new and different way—or rather, an old way, made new for today.

BOOKS BY DAVID ADAM:

The Edge of Glory, Triangle, 1985.
(Published in the USA by Morehouse Publishing.)

The Cry of the Deer, Triangle, 1987.
(Published in the USA by Morehouse)

Tides and Seasons, Triangle, 1989.

The Eye of the Eagle, Triangle, 1990.

Border Lands, the Best of David Adam, SPCK, 1991.

Power Lines, Triangle, 1992.

Fire of the North : The Illustrated Life of St. Cuthbert, SPCK, 1993.

The Open Gate, Triangle, 1994. (Published in the USA by Morehouse.)

The Rhythm of Life, Triangle, 1996.

REFERENCES

1. David Adam, *The Edge of Glory*, Morehouse Publishing, 1985, p. 7.
2. David Adam, *The Cry of the Deer*, Morehouse-Barlow, 1987, p. 12.
3. Ibid, p.83.
4. David Adam, *The Edge of Glory*, Morehouse Publishing, 1985, p. 3.
5. Ibid, p. 3.
6. Ibid, p. 12.
7. Ibid. p. 11.
8. This quote and those that follow are from a personal communication.
9. *The Edge of Glory*, p. 13.

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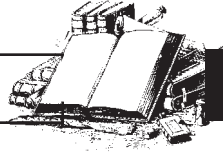
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BOOK REVIEWS



NONFICTION

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220.9. *The Indestructible Book*. Produced by Bueno Distribution, in association with Cambridge University Press and Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996. ISBN 8513526185. 4 videocassettes, about 60 min. each, \$59.99. Gr. 7 - Adult.

Volume One—How the Bible Began (1500 B.C. - 405 A.D.)

Volume Two—A Bible for the Common Man (389 A.D. - 1382 A.D.)

Volume Three—Martyrs for the Bible (1395 A.D. - 1536 A.D.)

Volume Four—From the King James Bible to the Shores of America (1533 A.D. - 1620 A.D.)

Most Americans know about the King James Version of the Bible, with the familiar “thee’s” and “thou’s” and Old English verbs. Many of us even memorized passages from it while growing up. However, I was woefully unaware of the history behind the Bible or the struggle to get it translated into English. I didn’t know that it was this battle which precipitated the Dark Ages and energized the Reformation, making famous the likes of John Wycliffe, William Tyndale, and Martin Luther, along with the infamous Nero, King Henry VIII, and Queen “Bloody Mary.” Although I’d heard of these periods and people, I didn’t know this fight linked them together. I also didn’t know that many men and women were tortured, executed, or burned at the stake for teaching their children the Lord’s Prayer in English, or for reading an English version of the Bible in college dorm rooms to fellow students, or for believing that God alone is sovereign—not the Pope or the King.

Then I watched the video series *The Indestructible Book*, sometimes stopping to wipe away tears. I now understand the general connections between the periods and the people. I also hold a greater, deeper appreciation for my Bible knowing that many believers died to give me freedom to read my own copy of God’s word.

These videos were shot on location in Israel, Europe, Britain, and the United States, providing a dramatic overview of important events behind the Bible, from the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai to Plymouth Rock where Pilgrim families sought freedom to worship God without governmental interference. Hosted by Ken Connolly, an elderly Englishman and Bible scholar, his accent occasionally obscures the

narration until subsequent shots of a sign or subtitle make it clear to the viewer. But the tone of his narration is gentle and non-divisive. Additionally, the superb quality of this series could easily compare to the best documentaries produced for television today, with exquisite graphics, original background music by Grammy nominee Jeremy Dalton, and an attractive slipcover to accommodate all four videos for safekeeping. It’s a must for every church library and Christian school.

Due to content and graphic descriptions, it’s not appropriate for young children, but geared for older students and adults. Additional uses could include weekly Bible study groups, with discussion about doctrines and how they develop, or reasons behind today’s public support for separation of church and state.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

*Kimn Swenson Gollnick
Writer, Editor
Marysville, Washington*

220.9. Rogerson, J. W. *The Bible. (Cultural Atlas for Young People). Facts On File, 1993. ISBN 0816029083. Hardbound, \$17.95. Gr. 6 - 12*

This colorful 12 x 9 1/2” ninety-six page atlas provides a general overview of the history and geography of the Bible and biblical era. The atlas is divided into two parts. Part one is the history of Bible lands and part two the geography of Bible lands. Each chapter is a double page spread. The descriptive text explains each subject in today’s language: i.e. in the chapter on Solomon and his buildings, the term labor gangs is used in the sentence, “The blocks of stone were quarried in Israel by men who were forced into labor gangs.”

Enhancements include color photographs with brief explanations. Time lines are interspersed throughout the book. Salt relief maps and scale models of illustrated sites or buildings can be created for student projects. However, information given can lead the reader to a dead end. After describing the importance of the four-sided stone pillar known as the Black Obelisk found at ancient Kalhu, no picture is shown, Kalhu can not be located on the map, and in the index the Black Obelisk is listed under obelisks.

The atlas has a very non-theological slant and Christian and parochial schools should be aware

that the historical perspective is flawed. Being too general tends to leave out important truths. In Moses and the exodus chapter, the following sentence reads, “Faced by water ahead and with Pharaoh’s army behind, the Israelites crossed (on dry land), while the Egyptians’ heavy chariots became bogged down.” Scripture references are irregular and sometimes not given. More are needed for students who do not have a biblical background.

The introduction, table of dates, glossary, gazetteer, bibliography, and index add to the usefulness of the atlas.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 3

*Carolyn Jo Ballard
Librarian, Z. J. Loussac Public Library
Anchorage, Alaska*

232. Maier, Paul L. *In the Fullness of Time*. HarperCollins, 1991. ISBN 0060654007. Hardbound, \$24.00. Gr. 11 - Adult.

In the Fullness of Time is a three part book examining first, the birth of Christ, second, the death and resurrection of Christ, and finally the spread of Christianity after Jesus’ resurrection. Dr. Maier accepts the accounts in the Gospels and Acts as true, and then explains them from a historian’s perspective by showing how they fit within the historical and cultural background of the first century.

Paul Maier is a professor of ancient history at Western Michigan University. He is an expert in his field and does an excellent job of making the New Testament come alive by placing it in its historical and cultural context. The book is illustrated with dozens of pictures, some in beautiful color, and contains a helpful bibliography. *In the Fullness of Time* is written for adults, but would probably also be suitable for a Christian high school textbook.

In a time when the Gospels and Acts are increasingly under attack, it is refreshing to read a historian’s survey of Jesus’ birth, resurrection and the early church which is not “destructive.” Those looking for critical theories and speculative reconstruction’s of Jesus’ life, will have to look elsewhere.

u Quality - 4 Acceptability 5

Dennis Ingolfsland

Director of Library Services/Assistant Professor of Bible
Bryan College, Tennessee

**232. Yancey, Philip. *The Jesus I Never Knew*.
Zondervan, 1996. ISBN 0310385709.
Hardbound, \$18.99. Adult.**

Mention the name "Jesus" and nearly everyone in North America comes up with some mental image...most such images are encrusted with years of tradition from theological preconceptions, Sunday schools, books, or even from the secular media. But what was Jesus really like? And how do you know that your mental image of Jesus corresponds to who Jesus really was?

Essentially, this is the question asked and answered in Philip Yancey's *The Jesus I Never Knew*. His first chapter, "The Jesus I thought I Knew" discusses many of these images, like the "Mister Rogers" Jesus, or the "Star Trek Vulcan" type of Jesus who is always "calm, cool, and collected". Yancey shows evidence from the Gospels themselves, that these and other images of Jesus are not entirely accurate.

So Yancey sets out to re-examine our image of Jesus. It's not that he destroys all previous images and then himself reconstructs the way it really was. Rather he uses the Gospels, ancient culture, and modern quotations to cause us to re-think our own views of Jesus. After reading Yancey's book we may still not agree entirely on what Jesus was really like, but our mental image will probably be closer to the biblical view than before we read the book.

Although I have no way of knowing for sure, I suspect that *The Jesus I Never Knew* is the evangelical answer to Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time by Marcus Borg, of Jesus' Seminar fame (HarperCollins, 1994). Borg's book is a view of Jesus based on those few bits and pieces of the Gospels and other writings which Borg considers to be authentic. By contrast, Yancey attempts to paint a picture of Jesus which the Gospel writers intended to present.

Philip Yancey is the editor-at-large for *Christianity Today* magazine. His book is challenging, very well written, and easy to read. It won the "1996 Gold Medallion Christian Book of the Year Award" from the Evangelical Christian Publisher's Association. The book is not indexed, but it is not the kind of book that really needs an index.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Dennis Ingolfsland

Director of Library Services / Assistant Professor of Bible
Bryan College, Tennessee

touching, funny,
& genuine

PostScriptPicture

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248.8. Dobson, James C. *Finding God's Will for Your Life*. (Life on the Edge; 1). ISBN 1561792071.

—241. *The Myth of Safe Sex*. (Life on the Edge; 2). ISBN 1561792713.

—248.8. *Love Must Be Tough*. (Life on the Edge; 3). ISBN 1561792721.

—248.8. *The Keys to a Lifelong Love*. (Life on the Edge; 4). ISBN 1561791997.

—248.8. *Emotions : Can You Trust Them?* (Life on the Edge; 5). ISBN 156179273X.

—248.8. *When God Doesn't Make Sense*. (Life on the Edge; 6).

—248.8. *Pornography : Addictive, Progressive and Deadly*. (Life on the Edge; 7). ISBN 1561792756.

Focus on the Family Films, 1994. ISBN 1561792748. Videocassette, \$24.99. Gr. 11-Adult.

Finding God's Will for Your Life.

Facing all the changes coming so closely create much stress for young people today. Dr. Dobson's advice is to make God's word a "Lamp unto our feet and a light unto our paths." God will reveal what's at our feet and not always what is way "out in front" as we walk with him. He suggests giving each situation the "end of life test" to determine answers to some of our questions. What will it matter at life's end? Much discussion centers on a Christian's values. He recounts his last moments with Pete Marovich as he collapsed from basketball in Dr. Dobson's arms.

The Myth of Safe Sex. Dr. Joe McIlhaney joins Dr. Dobson on the video to add a physician's expertise in this hot issue facing youth today. He shares of the epidemic of transmitted diseases that is actually occurring and that syphilis is at a forty year high. He exposes the fallacy of condom use and reveals that date rape is very common. Listeners are encouraged to walk with God and save themselves for marriage.

Love Must Be Tough.

Being able to "breathe" in a relationship is the highlight of this message. Giving the partner room to make decisions and express themselves gives dignity and confidence to the marriage. He relates how he courted his wife and shares the stress points of their early relationship stages.

The Keys to a Lifelong Love.

Dr. Dobson outlines the twelve steps in the time-important process of bonding to another. He emphasizes that the bonding steps should continue after marriage to deepen the marriage bond.

Emotions : Can You Trust Them?

Dobson defines emotions as cyclical, either steady or up and down. As we understand the swing of emotions, good nutrition, exercise and

rest, we make better decisions. He also points out the connection between emotional and physical health. Recognizing that our temperaments vary and we are all unique, brings much hope to us. James Dobson shares that joy comes from within, whereas happiness comes from "happenings."

When God Doesn't Make Sense.

Realizing that struggling in our Christian walk is a natural happening gives the listener encouragement. We wrestle harder when God doesn't explain himself to us, and we run the risk of becoming bitter. Dobson gives three keys to maintaining our relationship with God as we wait for his answers. Our perception of God, his timing, and his perfect love are strongholds for us.

Pornography : Addictive, Progressive and Deadly

Ted Bundy's riveting interview is the icing on the cake in this look at the warning against pornography. Dobson wisely exposes the tendencies of men to be visual as compared to women who are more touch oriented.

The seven part videos in this series are set in an informal gathering in a Colorado lodge. Dr. Dobson shares from his heart with the young adults gathered to learn from this Christian psychologist and author. After a brief presentation, the audience is allowed a question and answer time. Many in the audience are moved by the sincere relationship Dobson is able to establish with his audience in a short amount of time. Average length is forty minutes. Two experts add their expertise along with Dobson.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Carolyn Hearing
Retired Teacher, Freelance Writer
Raytown, Missouri

248.8. Fugate, J. Richard. *What the Bible Says About...Child Training*. Alpha Omega Publishers, 1992. ISBN 086717000X. Paperback, \$6.95. Adult.

What the Bible Says About...Child Training was originally published in 1980 and is on its tenth printing. It does exactly what the title indicates: interprets scriptures referring child training. Fugate lays out the biblical precedence for these principles: that parents must train their children (merely raising them, i.e. feeding, clothing, and sheltering them until they're grown, is not nearly enough); that parents must employ the rod to chastise or cause a child to repent from defiance (certainly not a popular philosophy currently); that parents must forgive (restore fellowship with) their children after they have admitted (confessed) their wrongdoing; and that nevertheless the children must be punished (though endure the consequences might be a more palatable term).

The book suffers from a legalistic tone. There is little joy in this book, except perhaps in its expected outcome—a self-disciplined child. Fugate says, "Parents may occasionally decide that a child has paid sufficient penalty without formal punishment. There is, however, a danger in making a habit of granting mercy. Only God has the right not to require an individual to pay for his guilt." If a child never experiences mercy from his parents, how can he understand God's mercy? How can he learn to be merciful toward siblings and peers? Won't he turn into an annoying little tattletale, always demanding a penalty on the other guy?

The book is attractively illustrated with charts and with realistic drawings of parents and children. Several chapters include helpful summaries. Fugate provides a bibliography, as well as appendices on the authority of the Bible, hope for failing parents, and a glossary of Greek words pertaining to children.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Andrea R. Huelsenbeck
Freelance Writer
Tempe, Arizona

248.8. O'Donnell, Michael. *How a Man Prepares His Sons for Life*. ISBN 1556618468.

—248.8. Farris, Michael. *How a Man Prepares His Daughters for Life*. ISBN 155661845X.

(Lifeskills for Men). Bethany House Publishers, 1996. Paperback, \$7.99. Adult

"As mentors, as teachers-for-life, we become for our sons a reference point not only for how things are done, but why they are done." As headmaster of a Christian school, Michael O'Donnell sees firsthand the influence fathers have on their sons. Family structure emerges as the most reliable predictor of behavior, and as a result, O'Donnell views mentoring as the center of his advice to men in impacting their sons. Men are encouraged to seek a mentoring relationship with their sons, in addition to seeking out other strong Christian men as examples and teachers. Developing respectful relationships with other men, build a strong, well-rounded young man.

Since O'Donnell believes most men ruin their lives in one major area, he centers his views on seven core issues fathers can work on to lay the foundation for healthy masculine character, preparing sons to be:

1. devout disciples of Christ;
2. good citizens;
3. holders of worthy vocations, responsible workers;
4. choosers of good friends;
5. able to enjoy life;
6. sexually chaste, understanding of male sexuality; and
7. lovers of their wives, supporters of their marriages.

Emotional needs form the bedrock on which to build relationship with sons: security, trust, love, acceptance, self-esteem, freedom, and limits. The author adds thoughts on career choice preparation and encourages fathers to teach sons to serve others as a path to success, using Jesus as the example. Each of the seven areas is carefully covered and O'Donnell alerts fathers to the path to prepare themselves for letting their sons go!

How A Man Prepares His Daughters for Life

Experience makes a great teacher. Michael Farris brings firsthand knowledge based on rearing six daughters as his background for *How a Man Prepares His Daughters for Life!* He offers practical, yet meaningful, direction for men who sincerely desire to train and teach daughters to be godly women.

Self examination helps fathers begin the teaching process. Farris asks fathers to determine if they are a stumbling block to their daughters. He looks at the areas of: the vows about their career choice (taking time away from family), always insisting they're right, lavishing gifts for approval, being a father in name only and afraid to relate to daughters because they are female.

Showing courtesy, positive encouragement, spiritual teaching and learning are high priorities with Farris, as well as basic rules of etiquette. He emphasizes careful listening to daughters and sets a pattern in his family with lessons on respect for authority.

Planning spiritual leadership in the family involves setting spiritual goals which he outlines for each child. Much time is spent discussing personal preparation to nourish his family. Also included is an example of how to teach his daughters to share their faith using his eight step plan. The contrast of courtship versus dating provides thought provoking discussion for families, and Farris cites numerous examples of other families and their stories. Step-by-step suggestions are also given for a plan to involve daughters in civic matters.

"Treating your wife with dignity and value is the most important way to encourage your daughter to embrace the God-given gift of Motherhood. "

How a Man Prepares His Daughters for Life holds the readers' interest like a friendly conversation. Farris' writing style, from his legal background, is smooth, enjoyable and easy to follow. Realizing we'll want to implement many of the biblical suggestions for rearing daughters, Farris admonishes us to pick a few at a time and

remember it's never too late to redeem ourselves as parents!

Life Skills For Men Series Bethany House

The books in this series follow a similar format. Each contains ten, easily read chapters and concludes with discussion questions for the reader or a group to use as the basis for sharing. It's interesting that both Michael O'Donnell and Michael Farris share many of the same tips for preparing daughters and sons, although they carefully distinguish the differences of their roles in the family. The authors use personal family anecdotes and are highly visible and qualified to write these advice-giving tomes.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

*Carolyn Hearing
Retired Teacher, Freelance Writer
Raytown, Missouri*

248.8. Johnson, Kevin. *Catch the Wave!* Bethany House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 1556618085. Paperbound, \$7.99. Gr. 7 - 12.

Kevin Johnson appeals to teenagers and young adults with this message: God "Wants you to find your place in his plan to change the world!" For the young person who struggles with the age old questions, Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going? Johnson presents a readable and exciting challenge: *Catch the Wave*.

The illustrations and stories relate to the world of surfing and pull the reader into the action. The key ideas continue the surfing motif with headings in bold print: Big Swell Truth #1, or Wave Catcher's Rule #1.

The Scripture is applied to daily life using realistic life situations, yet never sounds "preachy." The teen is led to discover that Jesus Christ expects his followers to actively serve him. Johnson lists several no-brainer things everyone can do to catch the Wave; then he goes on to challenge the youth to sign a pledge of commitment.

The first half of the book answers the question, Why?; the second half answers the How? of catching the wave to become an active Christian in the here and now. The last chapter lists organizations and briefly describes their focus to help youth find places to serve in short-term missions. Seminars are also listed; even Website addresses are given.

Youth sponsors will also be challenged by this book as they take an up-to-date look at what can be done today by the teens they are leading.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

*Delores Scarbrough
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Edmonds, Washington*

248.8. O'Connor, Joey. *Whadd'ya Gonna Do? : 25 Secrets for Getting a Life.* Baker Books, 1995. ISBN 0801011035. Hardbound, \$9.99. Gr. 12 - Adult.

"Life (after high school) is a wild and dangerous river, especially if you're not properly prepared for the long paddle..." Here is just one excerpt from this thought provoking little book written especially for a brand new high school graduate. Each one of the twenty-five short chapters is filled with compelling word pictures, practical suggestions, and frank questions the recent grad can ask himself as he is standing on the threshold of his life.

The chapter format purposefully contains a "story," the "secret," and the "plan" to spotlight a specific theme. Speaking in a language teens will appreciate, O'Connor pointedly informs them they are the ones in charge of their lives. They have big decisions that need to soon be made which must not be done haphazardly, but with great care. But the author skillfully weaves God into the picture as a force in their lives to be reckoned with. He says, "God is probably the only one in your life right now who's not going to tell you what to do...You are free to keep walking with him or not...You can experience freedom in Jesus Christ every day or you can fry your relationship with God after high school. Graduating with God means living in freedom. What a challenge! What a life! The choice is yours."

Each section encourages the reader to let God help him in his choices. Short assignments are given to coax him to weigh the cost of quick decision-making. Consider the long term. Write a life mission statement and use it as a sort of compass. There is even a chapter on allowing parents or a well-chosen mentor to be "walking encyclopedias" in his life by tapping their wisdom and partnering for their logic and input. Although the book is only 112 pages, one chapter a day would be a good way to give each concept presented time to sink in and be mulled over. O'Connor uses scriptural support effectively.

Whadd'ya Gonna Do? is one of the most practical, thoughtful gifts to come along for a recent graduate. Even older readers will be drawn into this book brimming with self-examining questions and suggestions every person could use. After reading this little book of wisdom, upon graduation a senior may no longer dread the incessant question from well-meaning relatives, "so whadd'ya gonna do?"

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

*Kari Janke
Freelance Journalist
Blanchard, Idaho*

249. Dobson, James C. and others. *Christ in Christmas : A Family Advent Celebration*. ISBN 0891096051.

—249. Colson, Charles and others. *Christ in Easter : A Family Celebration of Holy Week*. ISBN 0891093095.

NavPress, 1989. Paperbound, \$9.00. PS - Adult.

Christ in Christmas offers a rich storehouse of ideas to plan our celebration of Jesus' birth. Each week's events begin with a scripture and Christmas song followed by a personal devotional reading, including thought provoking questions for discussion. An object lesson, prayer, and another song conclude each Sunday's events. The themes range from expecting Jesus, to his birth, the shepherds, Magi, and the wonder of Christ himself.

Hands-on family activities go from emptying jars for object lessons to making puppets. The Christmas Eve celebration culminates with thoughts of what Jesus gives his children! James Dobson's and James Boice's devotionals are most "child friendly." The other author's vocabulary needs to be clarified to younger children.

Guiding families to a better understanding of the events surrounding the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the focus of *Christ in Easter: A Family Celebration of Holy Week*. Palm Sunday, The Last Supper, Good Friday, and the Resurrection are highlighted. Age appropriate activities are planned. Preparation is helpful.

Max Lucado's introductory story fits Jr. High and up, while discussion questions cause adults as well as kids to think. Poetic renderings are included, plus additional readings for older children.

Both of these paperbacks follow the same format: Scripture reading, songs, devotional reading or story, discussion, question time, and family activities. Each book's design is a work of art in itself. Scripture, often highlighted in decorative borders, is set off as special. Readers confirm scripture's role in the season's celebration. Bible readings for each day (for the one week plan of *Christ in Easter* and the month long *Christ in Christmas*) are taken from the New International Version or the New King James. They center around each week's theme. Printed at the bottom of each page is the step in the program.

A variety of questions pulls the studies together. Aimed at differing age levels, some are cognitive and others more reflective and thought provoking.

Most family activities require action by thinking of ways to display what has been learned. Some plan for writing out prayers to God to express feelings, or inviting neighbors over to share what the Lord has done in the family. Activities span five to thirty minutes depending on the interest

level of children. Some hymns included will be new to small children.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Carolyn Hearing
Retired Teacher, Freelance Writer
Raytown, Missouri

249. Merrill, Dean and Grace. *Together at Home*. Tyndale House Publishers, 1996. ISBN 0842371753. Paperbound, \$10.99. Adult.

Together at Home was originally published by Thomas Nelson Publishers in 1985. It's been recently released in a revised and expanded format (new and improved!). In this book, Dean and Grace Merrill share activities from fourteen years of Home Together Nights, which they instituted when their first child was five years old. The Merrills promote a weekly family night for a number of reasons: to keep lines of communication open, for bonding, for spiritual training, for quality time. The Merrills recommend incorporating a variety of elements into that special time: food (a meal or snack that children particularly enjoy); a special location (whether a foray to a park or a theater, or just an unusual space, like using the ping-pong table for dinner); child-friendly conversation (this is not the time to clarify the chore schedule); music; games; outreach (delivering a casserole to the neighbor with a new baby, cutting roses to bring to a nursing home); and ten minutes of spiritual teaching (can be related to current events or children's own lives).

Activities are suggested for seasons and holidays. Many are designed to combat worldly celebrations of materialism by focusing on events of Jesus' life and finding ways to honor him. Others celebrate family members or revolve around a story time or scripture. The Merrills suggest ways to include children of widely-spaced ages. Many activities could be repeated at intervals of a few months or years. A whole section focuses on ideas for activities for teens.

Although you could follow the suggestions in this book word-for-word (there are about two years' worth of ideas), it's more likely that readers will use the book as a jumping-off point and custom-design activities for their families based on their own hobbies and interests. That's the beauty of *Together at Home*—the Merrills' love for their children and their enthusiasm about family night are contagious.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Andrea R. Huelsenbeck
Freelance Writer
Tempe, Arizona

261.8. Collins, Gary R. *Family Shock : Keeping Families Strong in the Midst of Earthshaking Change*. Tyndale House Publishers, 1995. ISBN 0842317562. Hardbound, \$19.99. Adult.

God's Word says ". . . in an abundance of counselors there is victory" and Gary R. Collins, in *Family Shock*, ably demonstrates this. Using research reports, journal articles, and quotes from many sources, Collins offers readers hope and optimism for the future of the family.

Beginning by defining "family," he then discusses the influences faced by today's families. Building his case for optimism, he inserts stories of real families who have gone through change and crisis and emerged stronger than before, including a touching one about his own.

Lists such as Traits of a Happy Family, as well as fifty short articles by notables such as Jill and Stuart Briscoe and Larry Crabbe, are also scattered throughout the book, helping make his case while offering the reader practical advice. The articles written by Christians from countries or cultural backgrounds unfamiliar to the average American reader also help get across an important underlying message: no matter who we are, the future of the family is important.

"Sex, Gender and the Family" (Chapter 7) and "Single People and the Family" (Chapter 9) are particularly interesting, covering issues such as gender roles, homosexuality, and sex education, as well as pointing out the importance of singles in the family of God. Collins says, "Single people might not experience the same family shocks that married couples encounter, but we all need support, mutual encouragement, and opportunities to serve in God's family. We must never get so enthusiastic about family values and family strengths that we forget the people who are like Jesus in at least one important way—they're single."

Family Shock leaves the reader hopeful as well as more skeptical of the statistics used in the media's attempt to convince listeners of the failure of the American family. However, too many statistics and reports make the book dry in places, while some of the encouraging conclusions he arrives at seem to use as much creativity as the ones used by the media.

The sidebars, although interesting, break up the flow of Collins' writing, causing readers who stop to read them to lose Collins' train of thought and make the book slow reading. Collins also repeats ideas often in his effort to get his point across, which quickly becomes tedious. However, despite these weaknesses, the variety of quotes, articles and statistics used makes *Family Shock* a good reference book for the library of a church, counselor, or anyone else who does a lot of writing or speaking about the family.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 4

Betty Winslow

Freelance Writer/Librarian, Bowling Green Christian Academy
Bowling Green, Ohio

264. Garipey, Henry. *Songs in the Night : Inspiring Stories Behind 100 Hymns Born in Trial and Suffering.* Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996. ISBN 0802838022. Hardbound, \$20.00. Gr. 9 - Adult.

Not all songs are written as a response to an ill wind which has blown into the songwriter's life, but a surprising number are. Prolific author and retired Salvation Army officer Garipey has researched the stories behind 100 familiar, and some not so familiar, hymns and found their roots in sorrow and pain.

The author quotes an Hasidic saying which asserts "that a person expresses deep sorrow in three ways: the person on the lowest level cries; the person on the second level is silent; the person on the highest level knows how to turn the sorrow into song."

Songs in the Night is organized into thirteen sections, grouping the songs according to their theme, such as faith, prayer, and praise. Songs by Fanny Crosby (1820-1915) merit a section all their own, since the renowned songwriter penned more than 6,000 hymns despite being blinded in infancy by a doctor's error. Crosby's lyrics began as poems composed literally at night after she retired to her bedroom. Blessed with an incredible memory, she would memorize up to forty complete poems until these nocturnal inspirations could be put on paper.

In the section of "Songs of History," the author tells how in 1864 Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote the words on one of the most beloved Christmas carols amid the hate and destruction of the Civil War. "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" affirms the poet's strong faith that "God is not dead; nor doth He sleep; the wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, good will to men!"

Whether categorized in the music, history, or devotional section, this title will be an oft-lent book on any library's shelf. An alphabetical listing of the 100 hymns is included.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Waggoner

Freelance Writer
Grand Rapids, Michigan

270.089. Washington, Raleigh and Glen Kehrein. *Breaking down Walls : A Model for Reconciliation in an Age of Racial Strife.* Moody Press, 1993. ISBN 0802426425. Paperbound, \$10.99. Adult.

Racial strife and tension smolder in America and the world today, waiting for a "spark" to set them aflame. (Remember Los Angeles, 1992). Despite society's efforts over several decades to integrate ethnic populations, prejudice currently enjoys

good health in millions of hearts. These are not unfounded assumptions on the part of writers Raleigh Washington, a black man, and Glen Kehrein, a white man. Brothers in Christ and committed friends, they have spent more than ten years working together for racial reconciliation at Circle Urban Ministries and Rock Church on Chicago's West Side. Their co-authored book, *Breaking Down Walls*, is indeed a practical model for the larger Christian community to use in patterning their efforts toward multiethnic peace.

In Part I of their book, Raleigh and Glen each admit spending the first eighteen to twenty years of their lives with members of their own race. Each man's story will fascinate the reader. Raleigh lived with a single mom in the housing projects of Jacksonville, Florida, yet he rose to high rank in the U.S. Army, was released from service on false charges, and later reinstated. During his discharge God taught his family to walk by faith and called him to a preaching ministry.

Glen, of German-American descent, hailed from Ripon, Wisconsin, to attend Moody Bible Institute. In making black friends there, he was disturbed by the lack of cross-cultural "loving thy neighbor as thyself" in the evangelical church. He noticed the church's support of foreign missions, but its neglect of poorer races in America's inner cities.

The reader will marvel at the way God brought Raleigh and Glen together in ministry. Both men believe the church has been reluctant to lead efforts toward racial reconciliation, and that Satan enjoys the comfort we've experienced in the historical development of homogenous churches (in racial or social class groupings)

Their book proposes a solution: the power of the cross of Jesus Christ. Jesus came to reconcile man to God and gave his disciples the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5: 17-18). In befriending Samaritans he set the example for breaking down racial barriers. Paul reminded the Jews and Gentiles of Ephesus that Christ came to bring unity to his church (Ephesians 2:14-15).

In Part 2 Raleigh and Glen present eight principles of racial reconciliation based on sound biblical principles and their own personal experiences. They have taught the principles to other ethnic groups (Hispanic and Asian), who have applied them successfully.

The authors support their thorough discussions of the eight principles with candid examples from their own struggles, misunderstandings, petty feelings, and resolutions. One example seems highly useful—the Fudge Ripple Sunday meetings. Each chapter ends with ideas for applying its principle in practical ways.

The authors clearly and carefully define "racism." They give deep insight into the ways blacks talk to blacks about whites (BBW), the ways whites talk to whites about blacks (WWB)

and how these practices fuel racist thinking. The reader will understand the mentality each race holds toward the other, and may discover some personal prejudicial thinking. This excellent book is interesting and provocative.

Raleigh and Glen alert readers to the seriousness of racism in the world today. They challenge the individual to take a first step—develop a friendship with someone of another race. They challenge the broader church to cross cultural lines—adopt a sister church. They propose a solution to break down racial barriers: follow Christ's command to love our neighbors as ourselves. If racism is a matter of the heart, then Jesus is the answer, for only Jesus can change hearts.

u Quality - 5 Acceptability 5

Rhonda Marie Lackey

Freelance Writer, Retired Teacher/Librarian
Tukwila, Washington

272.092. The Martyrs. Broadman & Holman, 1996. SPCN 8513526177. Videocassette, \$14.99. Gr. 6 - Adult.

From the apostles on through the 16th century, Christians were killed for refusing to give up their faith in Jesus Christ. They died by crucifixion, beheading, burning at the stake, and the swords of gladiators. Remarkably, their peace remained in the face of persecution and threatened death. This gives evidence to the reality of the God in whom they put their trust. As the Apostle Paul said, "But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him, Romans 6:9, RSV.

The conversational manner of writer and speaker Luci Swindol lends charm to *The Martyrs*, an introduction to the video series *The Indestructible Book*, reviewed above. She sits in her easy chair and talks about Foxe's *Christian Martyrs of the World*.

In this forty minute video, Luci tells briefly about fifteen specific martyrs or groups of martyrs whose stories are included in the book. For example, Andrew the apostle preached to the spectators while he died on a cross and some of them became believers. Cicely Ormes talked to the spectators while people prepared the fire to burn her to death, telling them why she believed in the Bible. She then died with a peaceful look on her face. John Huss sang a hymn so loudly, it drowned out the sound of the flames consuming him. Frequent black and white drawings help the viewer grasp the reality of what happened.

This glimpse into the several volumes of *Foxe's Actes and Monuments*, apparently condensed into *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, is an interesting overview of martyrdom history up to John Foxe's day. It stimulates a desire to learn more about the faith of the martyrs. Though it can be depressing to hear the accounts of the gory killings, this makes the courage of the martyrs stand out more. They must have had supernatural strength,

courage which does not fail in the face of extreme pain from torture must come from divine sustenance. What a challenge for those of us who call ourselves Christians! Could we say, "Foolish I may be, but I'm willing to die for that which I believe" as Cicely Ormes did? It is unpleasant to hear of this cruelty, but good for us to be aware we too may come under persecution for our faith. Some are experiencing this, even in America today. Perhaps learning more about the martyrs of the past will help prepare us to stand firm in the face of persecution.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Judith M. Gonzales
Freelance Writer
Moses Lake, Washington

273.7. Bruce, F. F. *In the Steps of the Apostle Paul*. Kregel Publications, . ISBN 082542254X. Hardbound, \$35.00. Gr. 4 - Adult.

When we think of Bible lands, we often concentrate on the "Holy Lands." F. F. Bruce's *In the Steps of the Apostle Paul* opens a whole new concept of what was happening in the world contemporary to Bible times, by exploring the locations along the routes of Apostle Paul's three missionary journeys. We are not only introduced to locations, but also given insight into the people and cultures, and even incidents that scriptures, or history record taking place there. Bruce, having traveled extensively, gives us plenty of extra biblical information and historical perspective. A rich Christian heritage not to be missed.

Oversized in a coffee table style book it is attractive to the eyes, from the sweeping view overlooking the theater at Ephesus on the front cover, to color photos of other majestic ruins packed on every page. The majority of photos are the work of Maurice S. Thompson who has taken numerous trips to places associated with biblical history. A great many of the pictures are full page, helping to give a feel for the actual place. Divided into comfortable chapters by names of each region or they can easily be read in short sittings. The book also offers the capacity to be read many times over and still find something new.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Jannet Hoefner
Freelance Writer
Prairie City, Oregon

283. Winner, David. *Desmond Tutu*. (People Who Have Helped the World). Morehouse Publishing, 1988. ISBN 0819215422. Paperbound, \$7.95. Gr. 7 - 12.

Apartheid may be a totally foreign concept to North Americans. However, hatred between two cultures living in close proximity to one another is very close to home no matter where we live.

The story of Desmond Tutu is an inspiring saga of one man standing for truth and unity. He is not an unbiased bystander. He is a man hated by some for his color and for his beliefs, and adored for his courage by his own people. He is a man who applies scriptural truth to his daily living and who is not afraid to stand even in the face of persecution.

This book is a bit dated in that it was published in 1988. Desmond Tutu was at the time serving a long-term prison sentence for his political stance against apartheid. He has since been released and readers will need to read the current end to the story in their newspapers.

The issues in South Africa have been discussed for many years in journals of all types. It is difficult to know every author's bias and the reason for the stories. However, here, David Winner presents both sides of the issues with a detailed history of how the situation in South Africa evolved. He does not present Desmond Tutu as the saint of the ages nor as a central cause for the unrest in South Africa. There are some vivid descriptions of the horrors of the demonstrations as well as the corruption of leaders of all parties. The pages are filled with photos which enhance the narration. The reader who is unfamiliar with the terminology or people groups is able to consult the glossary to be able to follow the history and get a general overview of the politics involved. Desmond Tutu is only one of the many strong leaders in South Africa who have stood against the brutality and demonstrations. He believes that discussion will lead to peace only when those in leadership of each group are willing to leave skin-color and historical hatred to work out a new culture for all peoples. This book is well worth the reading to give an understanding of the complexities of life in South Africa.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 4

Sharon Ann Rau
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Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada

305.42. Bryant, Jennifer. *Lucretia Mott : A Guiding Light*. (Women of Spirit Series). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995. ISBN 0802851150. Hardbound, \$15.00. ISBN 0802850987. Paperbound, \$8.00. Gr. 9 - Adult.

This biography centers around an unusual eighteenth century woman, Lucretia Mott. Not only does she break the traditional conservative Quaker mold to become a woman preacher, but her unceasing struggle to abolish slavery and create a viable woman's rights movement keep her busy as she travels and becomes an effective leader for the abolitionist and feminist movements. Though she often has to juggle home and ministry, she overcomes the tough odds of her personal life and the political climate of the times in which she lives.

Between the nature of the historical/cultural period and the often slow moving biographical writing style of the author, many may find the book *Lucretia Mott* tedious. It is, however, an interesting study of the times and culture of the Quakers, as well as a look at the early abolitionist and feminist movement. As a reference text on these subjects, *Lucretia Mott* is a worthy biography.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Susan Adderley
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Colorado Springs, Colorado

305.5. McKissack, Patricia C. and Fredrick. *Sojourner Truth : Ain't I a Woman?* Scholastic, 1992. ISBN 0590446908. Hardbound, \$13.95. Gr. 4 - 12.

"Over the years, the scars from the terrible whippings had healed, but they were forever fresh in their minds and hearts." Slavery scars, emotional and physical, motivate Isabella (Belle) Van Wagener to action. Watching her mother and father, owned by a Dutch immigrant, Belle feels the torment as she witnesses slave's children ripped from family and home. Even when New York votes to gradually free slaves, Belle stands by helplessly as her aged parents flounder for a direction in their lives. Later, lacking food and firewood, they die of starvation.

Belle is sold twice. While in the possession of John Dumont, Belle falls in love with Robert, another slave. Because his master arranges Robert's marriage to another, Belle and Robert meet secretly. Their alliance is discovered and Robert's beating leaves him severely injured. Dumont arranges a marriage between Belle and Tom. Their similar backgrounds bind them together out of respect. Tom's first wife was sold years earlier.

By the time Belle has four children, she discovers the Underground Railroad and meets sympathetic Quakers. She desperately wants to make wrong right and needs to channel her deep beliefs more constructively. Being criticized by fellow slaves, she doesn't realize her desire to give blind obedience to their masters hurts the slave's cause, in their opinion.

So, she revolts against the injustices playing out against her and leaves home and children and works for a Quaker family who aid her later in rescuing her son, Peter.

The next year Tom is freed and since their marriage is one of respect, they agree to separate. Tom dies soon. Over the years, Belle, renaming herself Sojourner Truth, actively participates in abolitionist speaking engagements nationwide. Her six-foot frame and quiet, deliberate manner coupled with soul searching speeches, demands respect from listeners. Heads of state (Abe Lincoln), abolitionists (Harriet Beecher Stowe, Susan B. Anthony), and politicians (Frederick Douglass) seek her out to aid the cause.

At eighty-six Sojourner dies and leaves a rich heritage, having spoken out against injustice and oppression and for women's suffrage

Grade school teachers find this type of biography helpful in classroom research as it is easily read independently. The black and white photos, gathered from many historical societies, reveal the seriousness of the times on the subject's faces. The bibliography and detailed index provide more direction for those wanting additional information.

There is reference to Sojourner unbuttoning her blouse. Some said hers was not the voice of a woman and they wanted her to prove it. So she did.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Carolyn Hearing
Retired Teacher, Freelance Writer
Raytown, Missouri

305.5. Taylor-Boyd, Susan. *Sojourner Truth. (People Who Have Helped the World). Morehouse Publishing, 1989. ISBN 0819215414. Paperbound, \$7.95. HS - Adult.*

"I'm against slavery because I want to keep the white folks who hold slaves from getting sent to hell!" said Sojourner Truth, a courageous black woman who lived in America from 1797-1883. She became an articulate advocate for human rights. Born a slave named Isabella, sold three times like cattle, she obtained freedom in 1826. After working seventeen years as a household servant, she began traveling and preaching in the northeast and midwest states, demanding justice and respect for blacks and women. She believed God, whom she chose as her master, wanted her to help secure freedom and equality for all people. She lived to see blacks given the right to vote by the fifteenth amendment. After her death, the civil rights movement continued with formation of the NAACP. In 1920, the nineteenth amendment gave women the right to vote.

In this biography by Susan Taylor-Boyd, much history comes alive for the earnest reader. It is one of eight books in the *People Who Have Helped The World* series. Slavery, the Dred Scott Decision, Emancipation Proclamation, and Civil War are discussed in such a way as to help the reader understand both sides.

Attractive black and white drawings and color paintings scattered throughout the sixty-eight page book add interest and widen the historical viewpoint of the reader. At the end are addresses of organizations and an extensive bibliography for those interested in more information about human rights movements or about Sojourner Truth. A helpful glossary, chronology and index are included.

The author seems to be in favor of the feminist movement which has gone far beyond the equal rights Sojourner Truth demanded. The National Organization For Women (NOW), formed in

1966, won equal pay for equal work (which Truth advocated) and has helped battered women. However, when mentioning its Equal Rights Amendment of 1972, the author says nothing about the controversy involved which prevented its ratification. Neither does she mention that, in present times, NOW fights for abortion rights and rights of homosexuals. Since Sojourner Truth was a Christian, she probably would likely not have favored a movement which strives to give unbiblical rights to some people at the expense of others. But since the biography did not portray Truth as a feminist in today's terms, the book still has value for Christians if tempered by other viewpoints on feminism.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 3

Judith M. Gonzales
Freelance Writer
Moses Lake, Washington

306.4. Flowers, Sarah. *Sports in America. (Lucent Overview Series). Lucent Books, 1996. ISBN 1560061782. Hardbound, \$16.95. Order direct, 1-800-231-5163. Gr. 6 - Adult.*

This library bound edition from the Overview Series gives the reader a good idea of the importance sports plays in American life. Flowers discusses how all kinds of sports have become BIG business for all the people involved, except perhaps for the fans who are in many cases finding it hard to support players with million dollar salaries and paying high ticket prices. Yet for pointing out the problem she is also fair in describing the good will of some players and the benefits young people involved in sports derive.

Chapter headings are timely questions on the minds of today's reader: "Is Sexism a Problem in Sports?" "Are Drugs a Problem in Sports?" These are questions that are discussed at many levels each day. Flowers writes as objectively as possible to answer the question. Since the book contains a bibliography and list of works consulted readers may decide whether or not to delve into the questions further.

Photographs, black and white charts, and cartoons are used to amplify and support the text. This would be useful for students working on reports in this area. Schools with very limited budgets may want to pass and have students use the public library copy. If money is not an issue, this title and others in the series would be welcome additions to a school library media center.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Leslie Greaves Radloff
Teacher/Librarian, Emanuel Lutheran School (WELS)
W. St. Paul, Minnesota

306.874. Olsen, Terry. *My Father, My Hero : Becoming Your Child's Best Friend. WinePress Publishing, 1995. ISBN 1883893135. Paperbound, \$9.99 (Order direct, Family Insights, 800-595-4415.) Adult*

In *My Father, My Hero*, Terry Olsen has broached a subject that will elicit many strong feelings from his readers. Olsen's book analyzes the various roles that a father must play, from teacher to friend to hero, using a variety of tones, ranging from encouragement to instruction. It is a useful tool for fathers who wish to be an effective parent and husband.

The subject of fathers lends itself to the use of examples, anecdotes, and personal stories, and this book is full of them. Their use gives the book a personal and friendly tone while at the same time leaving the author room to instruct and advise. Olsen also uses a number of examples from his many years as a single dad to encourage those who may find themselves in a similar situation.

Each chapter concludes with a series of questions or comments to compel the reader to personalize and apply the book. The final chapter, entitled *Dad the Do-er*, powerfully prompts fathers to actively investigate, and if necessary, change their lifestyle.

In the chapter entitled *Dad the Teacher*, Olsen unequivocally advocates corporal punishment, which may make some readers uncomfortable. However, this book is an important resource for any father who wants to take his role as a parent seriously, and hopes to see his children "stand up and call him blessed."

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Chris Steenhof
Teacher
Smithers, British Columbia, Canada

363.7. Cochran, Gary. *Shaping Our Environmental Conscience : The Caring Christian's Environmental Guide. Old Rugged Cross Press, 1995. ISBN 1882270290. Paperbound, \$8.95. Adult.*

Environmentalism, as the word stands today, has fallen short of protecting and enhancing the world in which we live. We cannot focus on just the "natural" elements of the environment and assume the problem is solved. Pollution, overgrowth of populations, and misuse of our resources is but one small issue in the overall plan of wise and healthy living standards.

Gary Cochran, in his guide book, *Shaping Our Environmental Conscience*, reiterates the importance of understanding the sociobehavioral aspect of our environment—attitudes that effect the way we and others live. An example is how urban slums become caught in an endless cycle of non-caring landlords in a non-caring environment where survival can become base and hazardous to those who dwell there.

Improvements are possible, but without involving every aspect of life: natural, economic, and social, the “answers” are a placebo at best.

The author states the importance of balance when trying to achieve a healthy, workable environment. We are responsible to be good stewards of all that we have been given, which involves more than just our own personal living space. Balance is important in our views, in finding what responsibilities we have to help gain and maintain a healthy environment, and in how we deal with the organizations that have been established to speak to environmental issues.

This book gives an interesting appraisal of what environment really is and offers some practical action that can be taken, as well as giving realistic views on what dangers and successes we face as a society as a whole.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Mary McKinney
Freelance Writer
Port Orchard, Washington

370. Pollard, Michael. *Maria Montessori. (People Who Have Helped the World). Morehouse Publishing, 1990. ISBN 0819215392. Paperbound, \$7.95. Gr. 7 - 12.*

From the series *People Who Have Helped the World*, *Maria Montessori* is a biographical as well as an educational book that is both interesting and thought-provoking. In this attractive paperback book every double-page spread contains at least one black and white or color photograph and/or painting. In addition to this, captions and quotes are arranged in the sidebars of every page.

The story of Maria Montessori is fascinating and informative. It tells of the hopeless lives of the poor in Italy, those for which Maria had compassion. It gives specific details to show how she used her unconventional educational methods with great success.

Michael Pollard's book is a wonderful source to explain the philosophy behind the Montessori movement, but the reader should be aware that this is not necessarily based on Christian principles. This is seen in ideas such as education begins with the child not the teacher, the concept that children prefer work to play, and the belief that teachers should not interfere with a child's freedom of choice.

Other books in this series of *People Who Have Helped the World* include subjects such as Marie Curie, John Muir, Mother Teresa, Sojourner Truth, Desmond Tutu, Raoul Wallenberg, and Martin Luther King, Jr.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Esther Knaupp
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Corvallis, Oregon

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370.1. *Philosophy of Christian School Education. Edited by Paul A. Kienel and others. Assn. of Christian Schools Intl., 1995. 6241 BOOK. Paperbound, \$25.95. Order direct, 1-719-528-6906. Adult.*

Philosophy of Christian School Education is the quintessential textbook for the college level course of the same name. The introduction and eighteen chapters are written by seventeen different eminently qualified educators. The basic premise of the book is that the mission of education is the orderly transmission of truth from one generation to the next. When God is omitted from that process, the “truth” is severely flawed.

The book begins with a general overview of philosophy, narrowing down to Christian educational philosophy. Subsequent chapters focus on the effect of Christian educational philosophy on all aspects of Christian schooling, including the learning process, the students, the teachers, methods, special needs, discipline, classroom atmosphere, relationships, and society.

The text is attractively laid out. Each chapter begins with Targets for Understanding, questions to help the student focus on the important concepts. The margins contain quotes from biblical, historical, and contemporary sources which support the text. Charts illustrate the material, and sidebars offer supplementary insights. Each chapter closes with a Summary, a list of Concepts for Comprehension, some challenging Assignments for Further Study, endnotes, references, and a biography of the contributor(s) of that chapter.

What is most remarkable about *Philosophy of Christian School Education* is its scope. It is a thorough examination of every facet of Christian educational philosophy.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

6252 VIDEO. Videocassettes, \$105.95.

This video series is one component of the philosophy of Christian school education requirement toward certification by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). It is designed for either individual or group use, and can be used as part of a college course or in-service training. The material covered serves as an overview or introduction to a year-long course of study. Each concept introduced is covered in greater detail in the textbook by the same name. The purpose of the videotapes is to challenge the Christian educator to formulate his/her philosophy of education. A reproducible outline is provided.

Topics discussed include: a contrast of the Christian and secular approaches to education; an examination of humanism and its influence on education, secular and Christian; and the necessary “ingredients” of a Christian philosophy of education.

The format is a three-part, taped live lecture by Ollie E. Gibbs, Ed. D, Vice President for Academic Affairs of the ACSI. Gibbs' interaction with the students and his spontaneous humor keep the viewers' attention. However, the presentation lacks polish. Especially in the first tape, Gibbs repeats and pauses after points that are already written out in the provided outline, as if he expects the students to be taking notes. He also brings up concepts only to say, “We'll get into that in Session 3.”

One problematic feature is that when important points are listed on the screen, it's done in pale letters on a pink-to-rose background mottled with the logo of ACSI. In a group situation, those sitting more than a few feet from the screen are going to have difficulty reading it.

The overall tone of the presentation is one of commitment to Christ and to the principle of equipping children with the whole truth.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Andrea R. Huelsenbeck
Freelance Writer
Tempe, Arizona

371. Berry, Sharon R. *100 Ideas That Work! : Discipline in the Classroom. Assn. of Christian Schools Intl., 1994. 6311 BOOK. Paperbound, \$6.15. Order direct, 1-719-528-6906. Adult.*

Discipline means disciple. The ultimate goal of a classroom teacher is to motivate student self-discipline in order to please God. Good discipline encompasses class routine, teacher preparation, intervention strategies, and building a positive relationship between student and teacher. Sharon R. Berry's ideas on discipline are teacher tested and will help both new and experienced teachers prevent and deal with negative classroom situations. Readers will find this unique book jam-packed with great practical ideas. Primarily designed for classroom teachers, parents and Sunday School teachers will also find many helpful suggestions.

Although a short book (only 24 pages long), this excellent resource contains one hundred well-organized ideas. Each idea begins with a succinct statement followed by a short explanation. An area called “Simple Principles” talks about praying for students and treating parents as partners. “Class Preparation” includes organization, advance preparation, using seating charts, and establishing consistent routines. “General Procedures” gives suggestions on positive student-teacher communication that forestalls problems. “Specific Intervention Techniques” provides methods that overcome specific problems. “Individual Intervention” focuses on problems that have escalated. The book closes with a list of words that positively affirm students, such as “Sensational, Spectacular, First Rate.” These words also describe this book!

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Paula Stewart Marks

Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon

371. Gangel, Kenneth O. *Called to Teach : A Biblical Challenge to Renounce Intellectual Idolatry and Dedicate Ourselves to Spiritual Discipleship on Christian School Campuses.* Assn. of Christian Schools Intl., 1995. 6305 BOOK. Paperbound, \$15.95. Order direct, 1-719-528-6906. Adult.

Christian educators are called, not merely to endless paperwork, lesson planning, and distilling facts and ideas into bite size learnable morsels, but to disciple and nurture the students entrusted to them. Kenneth O. Gangel's book *Called to Teach* clarifies that call. Each of the eighteen chapters contain messages (now updated) given at the yearly teacher conference sponsored by the Association of Christian Schools International. The challenge is directed at Christian School teachers to influence students daily and to focus on Christ and the Word of God as the main subject and foundation of all material taught.

This is the type of book that grows on you. It can be used as a personal or group devotion book. Although primarily designed for Christian school teachers, both Sunday School and public school teachers could benefit from the concepts given. It also contains a yearly journal of the growth of the ASCI, utilizes humorous tidbits, motivates with scripture that clarifies the spiritual responsibilities of all teachers. Black and white pictures frame bits of wisdom and add to selected scriptures.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Paula Stewart Marks

Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon

371. Gibbs, Ollie E. *Homework : Assignment to Assessment.* Assn. of Christian Schools Intl., 1995. KIT, \$95.95. Paperbound, \$10.95. Order direct, 1-719-528-6906. Adult.

All teachers give homework of some variety. This book explores the question of what homework should be given to what grade level. What makes homework effective? How can a teacher find the most beneficial assignments that have the most long term effectiveness? What factors will motivate students to complete and hand in homework? How do teachers effectively involve parents in helping at home? How can students become better organized so they remember assignments? How can students effectively take notes? Ollie Gibbs brings together excellent resources and careful research to answer these questions, plus many more.

This is an excellent resource for any classroom teacher. What teacher can resist finding out

about "Hassle Free Homework," or "Shortcuts for Correcting Homework?" This book is designed to make homework easier for both the teacher and the student. It is a well-organized step by step type of book that is easily read and assimilated, but deep enough to make you go back and dig for more tips and ideas. It will be an asset for any teacher's library.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Video In-Service Program (2 videocassettes; leader's guide; blackline master)

This in-service program is designed for teachers and consists of six-sessions lasting one hour each. Ollie Gibbs' book, *Homework: Assignment to Assessment*, is not included in the material, but is necessary for each participant, because of advance reading assignments. The leader's guide focuses on class activities that follow each session, as well as extended learning options. Blackline masters help teachers organize notes for video viewing.

The first video, "Achieving Homework Success," is aimed primarily at teachers. Although bringing out some good ideas, this video seems more philosophical than practical. The second idea, "Parents Do Homework Too!" can be used for parents as well as teachers in order to help parents help their children at home. This video applies "Grandma's Rule," which means "Finish all dinner before any dessert" to homework and completing tasks before rewards. It also encourages parents to set the stage for homework success by establishing a proper study area, providing adequate supplies, having a regular homework time, and teaching students to organize learning material. Reading the book and involvement in teacher discussion time is probably the most valuable part of the in-service. Ollie Gibbs is an excellent author, but only an average speaker. He conveys the more practical and pertinent details better in his book than on video.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Paula Stewart Marks

Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon

371.8. Swain, Sharon. *Christian Assemblies for Primary Schools : Linking Worship to National Curriculum.* Abingdon, 1995. ISBN 0281047928. Paperbound, \$16.99. Adult.

Designed for use in British schools where religious training is mandatory, Sharon Swain brings many fresh ideas that can be used in Sunday School, family devotions, or Christian school chapels and classrooms. Set up as a ten week curriculum, this book uses every-day objects to convey spiritual truths. One example given is to take a roll of toilet tissue (which shows perfect order), wrap it carefully around the class, then try to rewrap to the original order. This is an example of sin and trying to fix up our own lives when we fail.

Subjects given fit all people, such as thinking of others' needs, learning to listen, recognizing diversity, seeing God's power. Americans will encounter some cultural problems in using the book, because of unfamiliarity with English history, The Church of England, the British Royal Family, British words, meanings, and spelling. Overall, the book is very practical and imaginative and the cultural differences seem to add to the fun.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Paula Stewart Marks

Principal, Morning Star Christian School
Bend, Oregon

387.2. Macaulay, David. *Ship.* Houghton Mifflin, 1993. ISBN 0395524393. Paperbound, \$8.95. Gr. 7 - Adult.

David Macaulay weaves an intriguing tale in the first half of this book about a team of undersea archaeologists searching for historical relics at shipwreck sites in the Bahamas, particularly at the Brazos Del Diablo Reef. They locate what appears to be a caravel, a ship built in the sixteenth century, similar to those that Christopher Columbus used. After surveying the area and accurately mapping mounds that might cover items of interest, they move on to another site while awaiting permission from the Cherubian government to excavate. Unfortunately, treasure seekers hit the site before the team can return.

Macaulay draws us into the story, allowing us to feel the archaeologists' excitement, disappointment, and thrill of discovery as they unravel the mystery of this sunken craft.

The second half of the book is devoted to diary entries discovered in a maritime archive by one of the researchers in the story. The diary entries were made by one of the owners of the sunken ship as it was being built in 1504 B.C. He and his older brother imported dyewood and pearls from the Indies, and needed a new ship to facilitate exploration for new sources of these valuable goods. Details of the ship's construction are beautifully illustrated by watercolor and pencil, using a two-color process during printing.

Starting at the present day discovery of a sunken ship, the reader follows this maritime mystery, watching as the archaeologists and researchers trace the ship's story back in time, introducing us to methods such as matching artifacts to other finds, to dating them, then finding old documents in archives for that period.

Macaulay is effective in providing us the experience of two worlds: present day marine archaeology, and exploration during Columbus' day. Beautiful illustrations cover every page. The only drawback is the lack of a glossary for unfamiliar terms ("adze," "lead shot," etc.), which would have been helpful. There is also no bibliography or index.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Kimm Swenson Gollnick
Writer, Editor
Marysville, Washington

509. Henderson, Harry. *The Scientific Revolution.* (World History Series). Lucent Books, 1996. ISBN 1560062835. Hardbound, \$16.95. Order direct, 1-800-231-5163. Gr. 6 - Adult.

Another entry in the Lucent World History Series and very much like the rest. Good overall information, adequate reading list, heavy on the primary and secondary sources but colorless, rather lifeless. The volume is divided into three parts: fascinating discoveries in Europe between 1550 and 1900; how people learned to be scientists; and how science affected the way people saw their world and how they live. In four hundred years people's ways of thinking were transformed opening up the door for the discoveries of the twentieth century.

Many interesting tidbits of information to delight those interested trivia from the derivation of the word algebra to Descartes method of problem solving. Heavy on the male scientists of the age, Marie Curie is mentioned in conjunction with her husband. The information is more of an overview than comprehensive and thus is good for a beginning.

However as with the other the volumes this is grey and drab. Pages are well-designed with text broken up by illustrations. There is a glossary of terms and a clear index. Authors show the arguments of the church against science in an unbiased way.

Christian readers today will think about how we have all been blessed through the hard work and discoveries of these scientists whether they were believers or not. Teachers in Christian schools will be able to point out how the Lord allowed these discoveries to be made and how through science many of the prevailing superstitions were put to rest. As with the other titles in this series, schools with small budgets should consider carefully. More useful for junior or senior high than the elementary.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Leslie Greaves Radloff
Teacher/Librarian, Emanuel Lutheran School(WELS)
W. St. Paul, Minnesota

530. Birch, Beverley. *Marie Curie.* (People Who Have Helped the World). Morehouse Publishing, 1988. ISBN 0819215228. Paperbound, \$7.95. Gr. 7 - 12.

Marie Curie was born in Poland, which was actually ruled by the Tsar of Russia. Polish culture and education was outlawed. When Marie was eight, her older sister died of typhus and when she was ten, her mother died of complications from tuberculosis. In spite of

these weighty circumstances, her father filled the lives of his children with the joy of learning. He translated the literatures of other languages into Polish when they were not available.

"Marie's early life was...a time when the love of learning was instilled deep in the growing child. To have culture and knowledge, to use your mind and thoughts to become useful in the world, to enrich your experience more and more and more, these were the aims which their teacher-parents held high before them."

When Marie was finally accepted into the University in Sorbonne in France, she had already taught herself many of the subjects necessary for university entrance which had not been available to her. Imagine her frustration upon entering her first class and realizing that her ability to understand spoken French was totally inadequate to complete her education. Undaunted, she applied all of her energy to reach her goal of becoming a scientist. She lived with meager necessities and studied late into the night.

As she began her research projects, she met Pierre Curie and as they worked together they also fell in love. Marie was so intensely involved in her study of uranium and the possibilities that may exist for their medical use, she extended her research and became the first woman in all of Europe to ever complete a doctorate program.

In very primitive conditions with a poorly outfitted laboratory, Marie and Pierre worked together. Their discovery of radium has resulted in the widespread treatments for cancer which are used today. With the coming of the wars, she went to the war hospitals and worked with wounded soldiers, using x-rays for diagnosis. However, she had no idea that her research and use of radium without protection, was taking a toll on her own body. The discoveries that she made have saved the lives of many people but it actually killed her. We now know that radium is a highly radioactive substance. Marie gave her life to help mankind.

The story of Marie Curie is an easy-to-read narrative and the pages are filled with pictures, photographs, and many drawings of her life and work. Readers will be fascinated to see the many items of memorabilia which have been dedicated to Marie's life and work—stamps, statues, medals. Marie, Pierre, and their daughter Irene won the Nobel Prize—three times to one family; however, her goal was to find scientific answers, not to be recognized. There is no mention of her religious life but her dedication to her work will be inspiring reading to students of any age.

The bibliography cites other works on the life of Marie Curie and other nuclear scientists, nuclear energy, and radiation including magazines and organizations which provide more up-to-date information. A detailed glossary will be of particular assistance in understanding the scientific terms. The chronology at the end of the book give a perspective of the major events and

accomplishments of her life. An index is also included.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 4

Sharon Ann Rau
Librarian, Valley Christian Schools
Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada

598. Page, Jake. *Songs to Birds : Essays.* David R. Godine, 1993. ISBN 0879239573. Hardbound, \$18.95. Paperbound, \$12.95. Adult.

Jake Page has written a rather charming book not strictly about, or for the birds, but with enough information about birds to make you feel as though you have learned a great deal about starlings, finches, chimney swifts, and others and at the same time have gained a glimpse into the author's philosophy of life. Charming.

This is a book to read in segments, to allow for reading and re-reading, pondering ideas. His chapters begin with a common topic, junk mail for instance, that mountain which seems to grow daily, yet as Page points out it is direct, usually ambiguous, and sometimes surprising. And as he points out again, order one thing and you are on everyone's list FOREVER! All this because of a bird feeder. Readers will relate to this.

Another essay that caused much reflection was "The Golden Travel Guide." Baby boomers will remember those little volumes: Birds, Sea shells, Trees etc. Page's *Golden Field Guide to Birds of North America* was a reminder to him of the pleasures of years of traveling. Certain entries triggered memories of places where enjoyable and memorable things occurred. Delightful. The rose-breasted grosbeak near the Hopi house, peeps along the Californian coast. The essay is sure to bring back the readers' memories of their own trips.

Thoroughly enjoyable but four letter words do appear, not often, but they wouldn't have to be there at all to make a point. The author's musings are enjoyable enough.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Leslie Greaves Radloff
Teacher/Librarian, Emanuel Lutheran School(WELS)
W. St. Paul, Minnesota

599.4. Caras, Roger A. *A Most Dangerous Journey : The Life of an African Elephant.* Dial Books, 1995. ISBN 0803718802. Hardbound, \$15.99. Gr. 6 - Adult.

From the first description of Ndovu's birth to the end of the book Caras engages and keeps the reader's attention. Each day of this young elephant's life is described so vividly that the reader feels as though he is in Africa watching the elephant herd as it forages for food, plods on until water is found or is attacked by poachers. All the while the author has been giving you the facts about elephants, Africa, and the decimation

of the elephant herds. Elephants are still being slaughtered for their tusks in spite of the laws forbidding ivory trade.

The weakest part of the book is not the writing but the fact that the photographs are in black and white, no doubt to keep the cost down. Readers will want to use some of the juvenile non-fiction with color photographs or video available to picture the setting in full color.

Caras makes a powerful statement that it's up to people to ensure that the elephant survives in its native habitat into the next century. He points out that the food and water needs of the elephant are at odds with the farmers of the area and that ivory is still being bought and sold today even though it is illegal to do so.

There are vivid description of birth, life and death in this story but none that is gratuitous. Poachers are killed and their bodies left for the animals, one poacher shot but not dead is killed by a single bullet fired by one of the government men...this is part of life in Africa. The saddest, most poignant parts are the descriptions of the members of the elephant herd looking at the slaughtered family member or coming upon the carcass of a long-dead elephant in an elephant graveyard.

While not a particularly happy story, it was not all sad either. The family life of the elephant was described through the eyes, (ears?) of Nvodu as he learns how to live and survive in Africa.

Readers learn many interesting facts about elephants as they follow Nvodu and his family from place to place.

Readers will find this all interesting but a very specialized topic and unless there is a high demand for that in your school library I'd wait for the paperback version or rely on the public library. This will not circulate often in spite of its merits.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Leslie Greaves Radloff
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W. St. Paul, Minnesota

629.13. Weiss, Harvey. *Strange and Wonderful Aircraft*. Houghton Mifflin, 1995. ISBN 0395687160. Hardbound, \$15.95. Gr. 4 - 8.

The many, many photographs, drawings, and other illustrations that look like old prints and engravings help make *Strange and Wonderful Aircraft*, by Harvey Weiss, an incredible source of information about man learning to fly. He begins with reports of fanciful legends and stories of man's first attempts to fly like a bird. Then he makes a good break toward practical reality with kites and balloons, and then gliders. He explains what people were learning about aircraft: like the need for a tail for stability, how a curved wing works, and the use of the fixed wing. Weiss then explains carefully how air

flight works and why some early attempts failed. "The Wright brothers, as well as most other inventors, had many problems to solve before they were successful." He defined the Wright brothers' flight as the first plane that raised itself by its own power.

Included throughout the book are instructions and graphics on how to make various models, like a glider, a paper airplane, and a flying-propeller helicopter. Some of the illustrations are cartoon figures attempting various things, or explanations about how a principle works. Some are actual copies from the National Air and Space Museum at the Smithsonian. All of the pictures are in black and white, or black and white with blue added that gives them an older, authentic feeling. The text is written in a straightforward manner, as if to answer questions or satisfy the reader's curiosity, not like a textbook. A massive amount of information is given for the length of the book. It concludes with an informal bibliography, written in paragraph style about where to find further information.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Belcher
Teacher, Sylvan Way Christian School
Bremerton, Washington

629.277. Hautzig, David. *Pedal Power : How a Mountain Bike Is Made*. Lodestar/Dutton, 1996. ISBN 0525675086. Hardbound, \$15.99. Gr. 3 - Adult.

A bicycle means different things to different people. It may be used for fun or possibly for exercise. Knowing your bicycle is important for proper care and maintenance. David Hautzig begins with a photograph of a fully assembled mountain bike and has labeled all the parts. Then starting at the beginning with the types of materials bikes are made of, he shows you step by step how a mountain bike is manufactured. Each step is explained in detail and accompanied by a full-color photograph. You can truly understand the reasons behind why the bike must be made the way it is in order to work properly. To complete the book, Hautzig gives advice on buying the right size bike, how to properly maintain your bike, and bicycle riding safety.

A very interesting book. There is much technical information included, but it is accompanied by easy to understand illustrations. The information is presented in such a way as to intrigue you. Each color photograph also includes a descriptive caption. Through each step the operation of the bike is explained. David Hautzig has found a way to make this book interesting to children and adults alike. This is a hardbound book with a good quality library binding to stand up to frequent use. A thorough and complete treatment of the subject. A fine package.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Marcia Snyder
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Missoula, Montana

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649. Arterburn, Stephen and Jim Burns. *Steering Them Straight : A Parental Plan for Guiding Today's Youth Through the Temptations of Premarital Sex, Eating Disorders, Pornography, Suicide, Satanism, and Substance Abuse*. Focus on the Family Publishing, 1995. ISBN 1561794066. Paperbound, \$10.99. Adult.

Many parents will find themselves out of their comfort zones while reading *Steering Them Straight*. It is thorough in its examination of these serious issues and the steps parents need to take to prevent their children from falling prey—or to rescue them.

Stephen Arterburn is a well-known counselor and the co-founder of Minirth Meier New Life Clinics. Jim Burns has been active in youth ministry for over twenty years. They illustrate chapters on such difficult topics as homosexuality, AIDS, runaways, and eating disorders, with insights drawn from actual case studies. They address mysteries such as why one child experiments with drugs while another does not.

In reading Chapter 2, "The Evolution of the Dysfunctional Family," some parents may recognize themselves and be tempted to stop reading. I would urge readers to continue, as painful as it may be. The message of this book is that parents save lives by committing themselves to spending time with their kids—actively expressing their love, having fun together, lavishing attention on them, and teaching their children right from wrong through example and frank discussion.

The book's strong point is its practical advice. Most chapters ends with a section called You Can Make a Difference. Arterburn and Burns tell us how and why kids fall into destructive behaviors. They list warning signs, expose parental conduct that contributed to their children's problems, and give positive strategies that parents can use so that their kids won't be deceived into temptation.

For parents whose children have already succumbed, *Steering Them Straight* offers hope through parent intervention and professional counseling. The appendix gives resources such as organizations, books and curricula dealing with the crises delineated in the book.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Andrea R. Huelsenbeck
Freelance Writer
Tempe, Arizona

649. Bialostok, Steven. *Raising Readers : Helping Your Child to Literacy*. Peguis, 1992. ISBN 1895411378. Paperbound, \$14.00. Adult.

If you've thought that teaching a youngster to read was simply sitting down and using flash cards and phonics, then author Steven Bialostok has some things he wants to say to you. Forget about using those old workbooks and tear out sheets; as a reading specialist, Bialostok believes they're mostly a waste of your child's time and your money. Forget, too, about fretting and worrying over your child's lack of ability to read at the kindergarten age. Says Bialostok, many children are simply not ready.

So what does this teacher and lover of fine books recommend? Parents should make it a habit to read to their children, daily if possible. Parents should be readers themselves, so children can identify with the love of books just as their parents do. As Mom or Dad sits down and takes a child or two upon his/her lap, reading becomes a special family time. One that kids correlate with warmth and love. Thus, reading itself is a wondrous vehicle for learning, knowing, and understanding more about our world from a safe vantage point.

Bialostok advocates that learning to read is a lengthy process, one that takes time and patience. He firmly believes that no shortcut (or drilling sessions) can teach a child to read adequately. There are stages in learning to read and also some important do's and don'ts. Teach your children to enjoy good literature and expose them to a wide range of it, encourages the author.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Michele Howe
Freelance Writer and Homeschool Mother
LaSalle, Michigan

649. Greenspan, Stanley I. *The Challenging Child : Understanding, Raising, and Enjoying the Five "Difficult" Types of Children*. Addison-Wesley, 1995. ISBN 0201441934. Paperbound, \$12.00. Adult.

To the parent or professional who lives or works with children, this book offers some thoughtful reasons and solutions for difficult behavior in children. Dr. Greenspan, a child psychiatrist at George Washington University Medical School, proposes that for some children there are indeed physical and neurological factors that determine the way a child perceives his world and reacts. Dr. Greenspan has found in his work that there are certain strategies that can be used with challenging children which promote healthier reactions and more acceptable behavior. His approach focuses on how "nature" and "nurture" work in tandem. He maintains that life with an initially challenging or "difficult" child doesn't have to be a perpetual battleground. His goal is to provide a general philosophy that parents can use to gear child rearing for the normal easily

adjusted child plus specific strategies for more challenging children.

The author maps out the stages of child development from infancy through the elementary school years; and looks at the types of experiences children need at each particular stage in order to grow emotionally and intellectually. He attempts to describe how families can build on natural strengths and tailor their approaches to each child's unique set of characteristics and needs.

There are chapters devoted to each of the major challenging personality types which identify characteristics of that type and strategies for dealing with the child of that temperament. He identifies five major types of temperament: the highly sensitive child, the self-absorbed child, the defiant child, the inattentive child, and the active/aggressive child. He cautions that we are a mix of these traits, but by identifying patterns of reaction and behavior, we have some clues as to how to respond most effectively to children.

He states that the parent's goal is to understand the natural tendencies of the child and help him find better ways to cope. He offers a five-step process in relating to children that will enhance growth. These steps include: floor time (one-on-one), problem solving time, empathy, progress in small steps, and limit setting. Dr. Greenspan's examples of using these strategies make for understandable solutions for parents.

This is a helpful book, especially for parents who are at their wit's end as to what to do with a particular child. It is an excellent tool for identifying the traits of the difficult child, but also is very usable for any parent trying to raise healthy, responsible children. The Christian parent can enhance their parenting skills with Dr. Greenspan's approach, especially with relating the values of the Gospel in each of these strategies.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Mary Jarvis
Freelance Writer
Marysville, Washington

759.972. Goldstein, Ernest. *The Journey of Diego Rivera*. Lerner Publications, 1996. ISBN 0822520664. Hardbound, \$17.21. Gr. 7 - Adult.

The Journey of Diego Rivera is a treat. Not as glossy as the Eyewitness art series, this book has a continuity and flow to the text which gives the reader well researched facts about the subject. All readers, not just art students, or those familiar with Diego Rivera, will appreciate Goldstein's clear writing which puts this artist and his work into historical perspective.

It would be natural to mention Frieda Kahlo, Rivera's talented wife, and Goldstein does this, but only briefly when discussing the mural on which she is portrayed. Interested readers can

find the Turner biography of Kahlo to flesh out this artist.

The writer shows the historical significance of painter, his works, and the place in Mexican history as well as art history. For those who know little about Rivera he was a contemporary of Picasso, Braque, Matisse, and Modigliani, artists living in Paris in the early 1900's. As a leader of the Mexican Renaissance, Rivera went back to his native roots to portray the common people of Mexico in their fight against the Spanish. To bring his message to the people he used large scale murals portraying events in Mexican history.

These murals and others works by Rivera are reproduced in the text. Color reproduction is good and the picture captions clear. Readers learn how the impact of events, art, and other paintings studied by Rivera in France and Italy influenced his own painting style. Also included are an index and a short suggested reading list. While younger students may enjoy looking at the reproductions of some of the paintings and murals, the text is for a junior or senior high school reader, or an interested adult.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Leslie Greaves Radloff
Teacher/Librarian, Emanuel Lutheran School(WELS)
W. St. Paul, Minnesota

792.7. Schuman, Michael A. *Bill Cosby : Actor and Comedian*. (People to Know). Enslow Publishers, 1995. ISBN 0894905481. Hardbound, \$18.95. Gr. 5 - 12.

From the People to Know series, *Bill Cosby, Actor and Comedian* by Michael A. Schuman would be a welcome addition to any library. The colorful book cover gives the book an inviting appearance. Its library binding and laminated hard cover make it a good investment for heavy circulation. While its length of 124 pages of large margins and very readable print make it an option for reluctant readers, it is interesting for readers of any age.

Frequent black and white photographs throughout the book add to the interest of the text. Pages at the end include a chronology of Cosby's life, places to visit, and a bibliography of books for further reading.

The first chapter begins in 1964 as Bill Cosby is beginning to make a name for himself as a comedian and television star. It then goes back and tells about his early childhood and schooling. Schuman goes on to describe Cosby's journey to success and gives many details of what was happening in the United States which influenced his rise to fame.

Schuman, who has written for numerous magazines and newspapers and traveled extensively around the United States and the world, makes the reading of his book both interesting and informative.

Other books in this series of People to Know include people such as Clarence Thomas, John Glenn, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and Ross Perot.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Esther Knaupp
 Librarian, Santiam Christian School
 Corvallis, Oregon

796.323. *The Pistol : The Childhood Story of Pistol Pete Maravich.* Broadman & Holman, 1990. ISBN 851352624X. Videocassette, 104 min., \$18.99. Gr. 3 - 9.

This story of the early life of Pistol Pete Maravich begins with an older Pete explaining to his son what has happened. This narration in first person continues throughout the movie, along with the drama and dialogue. Pistol Pete is consumed with the game of basketball and dribbles his ball everywhere. His father, the coach of the nearby Clemson College basketball team, continually encourages him to dream and go after his dream. Pete begins to play on the high school team when he is a short eighth grader. Some of his moves are spectacular and it is soon evident that he will go far. He encounters various difficulties, primarily socially; and he sees himself as different from those around him.

While this is a very good story and the actor playing young Pete plays some incredible basketball, his acting was really not very convincing. He does talk about how uncomfortable he is in some situations, but the viewer does not feel the depth of the emotion that he talks about. While the original music adds to the story, the audio quality is a little weak in places. The video itself does not mention God or a relationship with him. The way that Pistol Pete's father lived through him and the pressure he put on him did not feel very healthy. The video comes with a Parenting Guide encouraging dads to spend more time with their sons and giving some advice about how to go about it. The written material also summarizes Pete's basketball life through college and into the pros, and then into his relationship with Jesus Christ before his death at age forty.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 4

Judy Belcher
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 Bremerton, Washington

796.357. *Burke, Tim and Christine. Major League Dad. Focus on the Family Publishing, 1994. ISBN 1561792128. Hardbound, \$16.99, \$15.99. Gr. 7 - Adult.*

To "sacrifice" in baseball parlance means to give up oneself, or be called out, so that another player can advance on the bases. Pitchers know this tactic well. Since they are traditionally not very good hitters, they are often called upon to bunt, or "sacrifice," so that, while they're thrown out at first base, a runner can safely go to second base.

Tim Burke was a major league pitcher for eight seasons. He understands the sacrifice. But he understands it not only on a professional level, but on a personal level as well.

Major League Dad is an autobiography designed with a tag-team approach by Tim and his wife, Christine. Written in the first-person, sections are subtitled with either "Tim" or "Christine" so that the reader knows whose perspective they are getting. Beginning with a short childhood history of both Burkes, the narrative picks up steam when they meet and marry. Tim's rise in the professional baseball arena also plays a significant part in the story. But even readers who are not sports fans will enjoy the main theme of the book, which is the Burke children, and the fact that Tim walked away from a lucrative, six-figure baseball contract at the age of thirty-four to spend more time with them and with Christine.

If possible, hankies should be "loaned" with this book, since the reader will be moved to tears by its considerable pathos. The Burkes' struggle with infertility will strike a cord with those who also experience this pain. Their decision to adopt special-needs children from foreign countries may be hard to understand, but definitely will be admired. Tim's abuse of alcohol in his early adult years, as well as both his and Christine's difficult childhoods, are certain stir the reader's emotions.

A recommended reading list on several specific topics, as well as information on adoption, is included. More than just another "sports biography," this title would find a welcome place in any library's marriage, parenting, or Christian living sections.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Waggoner
 Freelance Writer
 Grand Rapids, Michigan

811. *Singing America.* Edited by Neil Philip. Illustrated by Michael McCurdy. Viking, 1995. ISBN 0670861502. Hardbound, \$19.99. Gr. 5 - Adult.

Every library, both home and school, needs a great poetry anthology. *Singing America* by Neil Philip is a strong contender for that space. Philip has chosen the established favorites about our country, and thrown in a fistful of lesser known, for good measure. Walt Whitman, William Carlos Williams, and Emily Dickinson live in the same neighborhood as e. e. cummings and Mandan, transcribed by Frances Densmore.

The book is printed on heavy paper, with a generous use of white space, enticing the reader to turn just one more page. Illustrator Michael McCurdy adds to the intrigue with his drawings that bring to mind intricate linoleum block prints. The indices simplify finding the wanted poem, by table of contents, by index of poets, titles and first lines, and by subject. A page of further

reading suggestions and acknowledgments are other sources.

Some selections in *Singing America* are suitable for the intermediate elementary student, but most are for middle school and older. There are some objectionable themes portrayed, but that, too, reflects our national heritage.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 3

Su Hagerty
 Freelance Writer
 Issaquah, Washington

818. *Smith, Harold B. Hey Dad! Are We There Yet? : One Man's Tireless Search for the Perfect Family Vacation.* NavPress, 1994. ISBN 0891097732. Paperbound, \$7.00. Adult.

Anyone who has every been on a family vacation will find humor in the author's reflections on his (and his father's before him) quest for the perfect holiday. Dubbed the "Road Warrior," Smith's father, an engineer at Ford Motor Company, would take his family of four on an annual trek to see another part of the United States. The mishaps and adventures that were handled with humor and grace set the standard for Smith to follow as he took on the mantle of "Road Warrior" with his wife and sons.

This collection of humorous essays is made even more funny by appropriate cartoons by well-known syndicated cartoonist, John McPherson. Often compared to cartoonist Gary Larson because of his twisted sense of humor, McPherson nevertheless can find the funny aspect in almost any situation, a characteristic shared by author Smith.

Hey Dad! includes "Perfect Vacation" Planner Tips, such as "The emergency roadside telephone you desperately need will be temporarily out of order." And, "Deluxe," in motel parlance, simply means an additional \$10 room charge for putting stale mints on your pillow.

While the humor section of a school or church library may be one of the smaller categories, nevertheless, the lending activity of such books should increase as we see the value of laughing at ourselves. This title will help in that regard.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Waggoner
 Freelance Writer
 Grand Rapids, Michigan

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823.8. *MacDonald, George. The Gifts of the Child Christ : And Other Stories and Fairy Tales.* Edited by Glenn Edward Sadler. Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996. ISBN 0802841651. Paperbound, \$29.00. Gr. 9 - Adult.

George MacDonald (1824-1905), Scottish poet and novelist, is most famous for his fantasy

fiction which has transported children and adults alike to "cross a great frontier" to convert, even to baptize, [their] imagination," as C. S. Lewis described his encounter with MacDonald's writing.

The publisher has combined two previously released single volumes of short fairy tales and stories into one volume and added one short story, "Stephen Archer." Editor Sadler is very familiar with MacDonald, having also edited *An Expression of Character: Selected Letters of George MacDonald*, an earlier release by the same publisher. This edition is made even more appealing by the illustrations of MacDonald's contemporary, Arthur Hughes. These two creative giants, who "shared the same visionary sensitivity for the relation of the real to the ideal and the angelic," were introduced by a mutual friend, sculptor Alexander Munro.

In the introduction, Sadler, an English professor, gives the reader who may be new to MacDonald's stories a framework of background in order to better understand the writer and his tales. He credits MacDonald with creating his own kind of fairy tale. "As he continued throughout his life to search for the proper form for his visions and dreams, MacDonald translated his ideas into three basic variations of the fairy tale, which he attempted to develop: the domestic story, the double story or parable, and the read-aloud tale."

Although many MacDonald fans find his works abounding with symbolism and meaning, he denied that his stories had any one motivation or allegorical meaning. He claimed "that the meaning of his stories exists only in the mind of the individual reader and not in any allegorical pattern imposed on them." "And," he added, "children are not likely to trouble you about the meaning. They find what they are capable of finding, and more would be too much."

One recurring theme in MacDonald's tales is the Wise Woman, also known as Mistress North Wind. Her biographical roots lay in MacDonald's grandmother Isabella Robertson, who lived next door. Apparently a woman of great religious fervor, strong sense of justice, and an equally strong will, she made a deep impression on MacDonald as he grew.

No school or church fiction shelf would be complete without this 558-page collection of some of the best fantasy fiction ever penned.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Waggoner
Freelance Writer
Grand Rapids, Michigan

828. Williams, John Tyerman. *Pooh and the Philosophers : In Which It Is Shown That All of Western Philosophy Is Merely a Preamble to Winnie-the-Pooh.* Illustrated by Ernest H. Shepard. Dutton Books, 1996. ISBN 0525455205. Hardbound, \$21.75. Adult.

A. A. Milne has created one of the favorite sets of children's characters in western literature. Only Peter Cottontail can rival the Pooh as a character that endures reading to children over and over again. Although Peter has escaped analysis, here Pooh has not.

Williams takes statements of Pooh and his friends and compares their wit and insights with the western philosophers from the ancient Greeks through modern existentialism. He insists that the Pooh stories were, "no mere children's classic, unless, of course, we take it as an example of truths hidden from the wise and revealed to babes and sucklings." (p.2)

The illustrations are of good quality and accent the text nicely. This work is especially suited for advanced literature and the rabid adult Pooh fanciers who already own earlier works that attempted to analyze a "Bear of Enormous Brain." Other similar works are *The Pooh Perplex* (1979) by F. C. Crews, *The Tao of Pooh* (1982) by B. Hoff, and *The Te of Piglet* (1992) also by Hoff.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Henry Terrill
Serials Librarian, Harding University
Searcy, Arkansas

930.1. Charley, Catherine. *Tombs & Treasures.* Illustrated by Jonathan Adams. Viking, 1995. ISBN 0670858994.

—**936. Martell, Hazel Mary. *The Celts.* Illustrated by Bill Le Fever. ISBN 0670865583. Hardbound, \$15.99.**

(See Through History). Viking, 1995-6. Gr. 3 - 8.

Let your imagination soar as you take a visual journey back in time. Actually see the inside of burial tombs, sunken ships, and pyramids of old. In Viking's *Tombs & Treasures* readers will delight in the see-through scenes. Illustrated with colorful detailed pictures, this informative volume provides in-depth background information on the burial customs of people from around the world.

Readers will travel around the world to learn about Tutankhamen, Philip of Macedonia, Tamerlane, El Dorado, and The Taj Mahal among many others. Each topic provides the historical uncovering/evidence, burial customs common to the people, descriptions of the tomb itself, any known treasures found, maps of the area and more.

The Celts is another book in the Viking series. Unlike *Tombs & Treasures*, an overview of many

peoples' customs, this volume deals solely with the history and life of the Celts. Using the same format of providing four see-through pictures, readers will be able to view inside a typical Celt's home, look into their underground burial site, see what a broch is like, and take a peek into a Christian place of worship. This book explains in detail all facets of life regarding the Celts.

While highly informative, there are a few illustrated pictures of nude models. In *Tombs and Treasures* and *The Celts* each particular people's spiritual beliefs are discussed and examined; many of which are unacceptable to Christians.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 4

Michele Howe
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LaSalle, Michigan

938. Nardo, Don. *The Age of Pericles.* (World History Series). Lucent Books, 1996. ISBN 1560063033. Hardbound, \$16.95. Order direct, 1-800-231-5163. Gr. 6 - Adult.

Another well-written entry in the field of ancient history, and teachers who have read and used Nardo's *The Punic Wars* and *Caesar's Conquest of Gaul* in class will be happy with this volume too, but they will have to encourage students to pick up this book because it is drab and because ancient history is oh, so, ancient. For classes studying Greek civilization, Greek and Mediterranean history, and/ or the classics, this volume gives a broader understanding of the times. This title will flesh out the Eyewitness Ancient Greece because of having more depth of information.

Nardo explains the "Age of Pericles" to the unsophisticated reader in terms that are very understandable. Pericles, according to Plutarch, made "Athens the greatest and richest of all cities". This is the time when the great buildings of Athens were erected, the times of the wars between the city-states of Greece, the battle of Marathon, and war with Persia. There are so many ways to tie this in to the study of secular and Bible history.

Again the primary and secondary source quotes bring the story to life. The index and bibliography as well as works cited lead the reader to explore other sources as well although the titles may be somewhat beyond the reading level of the average student using this volume. In the right setting this will be a useful addition to the library.

Illustrations are interesting, but are black and white, so that it is difficult to see the details of the art, particularly when they are of a frieze or relief. Some of the other illustrations work better but there is no life to the design, no eye-catchers and young readers may well just pass them over thus losing much of the feel for the time period. A great loss since ancient art can be very stunning and appealing when the details are clear and

because Greek art and architecture influenced so many other cultures. Maps are clear and usable.

This would be useful in the right setting but consider carefully how many students will use this volume.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 4

Leslie Greaves Radloff
Teacher/ Librarian, Emanuel Lutheran School(WELS)
W. St. Paul, Minnesota

940.3. *First World War.* Edited by John D. Clare. (Living History Series; 1). Gulliver Books/Harcourt Brace, 1995. ISBN 0152000879. Hardbound, \$16.95. Gr. 6 - Adult.

If you or your students have ever searched for a book on World War I which was easily understood and interesting at the same time, this book is for you! Editor John D. Clare has beautifully crafted a wide ranging history of this far-reaching war. Contents include the prelude to the disaster, the murder at Sarajevo, the first moves into the war, draft registration and enlistment, trench warfare, life in the trenches, casualties, position warfare, the eastern front, Russia, weapons used, air warfare, the war at sea, America and her role, the shortages on the homefront, women and the war, propaganda, Versailles and after.

Each topic is covered with a clearly written two page spread accompanied with appropriate art work, photographs, and maps, each captioned for added information and interest. The editor has masterfully given the First World War a realistic face without glorifying its violence. The wide ranging topics make this of interest not only to the war history buff, but also to those interested in the homefront during the war years. It is easily understood by the average reader and presents many facets of the war not commonly found in books of this type. The front and back pieces contain maps and timelines useful to and easily accessed by the reader. An index is included. If the rest of this series lives up to the standard of this volume, it will be a must for school libraries.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Judy Driscoll
Teacher, Christ the King Academy
Poulsbo, Washington

940.53. McCormick, Anita Louise. *Japanese-American Internment in American History.* ISBN 0894907697.

—973. Fremon, David K. *Native Americans and the Reservation in American History.* ISBN 0894907670.

—973.8. Ferrell, Nancy Warren. *The Battle of the Little Bighorn in American History.* ISBN 0894907689.

(In American History). Enslow Publishers, 1996. Hardbound, \$18.95. Gr. 4 - 12.

Author Nancy Warren Ferrell has achieved a notable accomplishment in her coverage of Little Big Horn—she has taken a well-known, much written historical event and revitalizes it. She begins with recounting the history of the North American Indian, how life was for them before the Europeans arrived. By reviewing the history of the relationship between white settler and North American Indian the reader can comprehend why the Battle of Little Big Horn came to be. Through documentation and well-woven historical details it is clear how the tragic battle occurred.

This makes for a sound book for student reports and research since it is just under 130 pages and has a variety of bibliographical references. Another noteworthy aspect is how the author presents the information much like a fast paced novel, making it an engaging read for students.

Other books in the American History series are *Native Americans and the Reservation* and *Japanese-American Internment*. The books both cover shameful episodes of our American history: the relocation of people where there has been no crime, except for being victims of prejudice.

Native Americans and the Reservation by Anita Louise McCormick indicates how once the Europe settlers became self-sufficient, peaceful relations with the Indians began to deteriorate. McCormick gives insight, both past and present, on the conflict between the United States government and the Native American. This book, while not essential, would serve as an interesting supplement to Indian history studies.

David K. Fremon's book *Japanese-American Internment* looks at how at our nation unjustly, and at times viciously, turned against a people simply because of their ancestry. Filled with first person accounts, historical references and documents this book is an important contribution to W.W.II studies.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

Pam Webb
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Priest River, Idaho

973.2. Olasky, Marvin. *Fighting for Liberty and Virtue : Political and Cultural Wars in Eighteenth-Century America.* (The American Experience; 1). Crossway Books, 1995. ISBN 0891078487. Hardbound, \$25.00. Adult.

Marvin Olasky strips away the myth about the Christian foundations of American society and gives his readers a realistic look at both the good and bad, the beautiful and the ugly sides of American political and religious life in the 1700's. How I wish this historical overview had been available in the early 70's when I was working on my American Studies degree. This book really fills a void in presenting an unbiased view of America's Christian roots. Certainly every Christian college library should have this book and Christian college professors should use this text in their U. S. History courses.

In the opening chapter Olasky describes the early struggles of the colonies as the people formed their local city and colony governments, and tried to get along with the governing officials sent from London. All too often these officials got their job because of connections, not because of ability or training. Most of these people were corrupt morally. Olasky describes this period as "the ABCs of decadence—adultery, bribery, cover-up."

There were many theological battles fought during this century as the English sponsored Anglicans sought to control both the church and the government as they did at home, but were opposed violently by the dissenters who had fled to America to establish freedom of religion and especially freedom from the church of England. The reader gets a good overview of this religious battle that still emerges in American politics: the separation of church and state.

The author shows his readers how the original colonists fought through and thought through their individual religious, political, and philosophical differences, forming various coalitions to eventually unite the colonies under the Confederacy to declare their independence from England. The reader also gets a very candid look leaders of this new nation: Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, and others.

The book is well documented with fifty-eight pages of endnotes, twenty-four pages of bibliography, and an index. This strength may also be the book's weakness, as many paragraphs are full of quoted material that is difficult to read, especially when original sources are used with out-of-date spelling and vocabulary. There are eight pages of black and white photographs of the major American patriots who helped write the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Delores Scarbrough
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Edmonds, Washington

973.3. Lukes, Bonnie L. *The American Revolution*. (World History Series). Lucent Books, 1996. ISBN 1560062878. Hardbound, \$16.95. Order direct, 1-800-231-5163. Gr. 6 - Adult.

This well-written volume follows the same format as the others in the Lucent World History Series. After the foreword, the same one used in each volume, the reader is lead to a timeline of important dates in American History beginning in 1607 with Jamestown and continuing through to 1789 when Washington was inaugurated as first president. An index, bibliography for further reading, and a list of works consulted are included. However, these lists are very selective and readers will want to consult the card catalog for more in depth reading.

All illustrations, reproductions of pictures, charts and maps are black and white which makes the volume rather drab. Even the cover is a primarily grey with a colored picture. This volume is not as colorful or eye-catching as the Hakim series on American history, even though they too have black and white illustrations.

The arrangement of this volume does make it readable and easy to use, text and illustrations with some sidebars of information. A variety of primary and secondary sources as well as quotes are used to expand and reinforce facts. This title and the series have a lot going for it and except for the drabness of the design it is useful.

Readers younger than sixth grade will need to use this volume with guidance to find specific topics. They may want to turn to the Cambridge title of the same name, or the Brown Paper Bag Series although that is not as in depth in scope. Older readers may find the pages rather dull, but a resourceful instructor will be able to find color reproductions of most of the illustrations with little or no effort, and many newer American history textbooks now have the same illustrations used here in color.

The difficulty here is that this volume is up against some very strong entries in the field which the students will gravitate toward because of the attractiveness and readability. Librarians will want to look at all the possibilities before making a final choice, a choice which may well come down to cost.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 4

Leslie Greaves Radloff
Teacher/Librarian, Emanuel Lutheran School(WELS)
W. St. Paul, Minnesota

973.7. Morris, Jeffrey Brandon. *The Lincoln Way*. ISBN 0822529300.

—973.917. Morris, Jeffrey Brandon. *The FDR Way*. ISBN 0822529297.

(Great Presidential Decisions). Lerner Publications, 1995. Hardbound, \$17.21. Gr. 5 -12.

Of the making of many Lincoln biographies there is no end; more ink has probably been expended recounting the Lincoln legend than blood spilled during the Civil War—so, why this book? One of a series including Washington, Jefferson, FDR, Truman, and Reagan, *The Lincoln Way*, distinguishes itself from other juvenile presidential biographies by focusing on the way the president made his decisions. Chapters one through six present the historical stage setting and tell of Lincoln's early life and character; the remaining chapters (seven through thirteen) tell how Lincoln resolved six major problems of his administration. These included the decision to fight in the first place, the decision to back down in the Trent affair, the decision not to change the cabinet, the decision to free the slaves, the decisions regarding his generals, and the unfinished decision: reconstruction.

Except for the Trent affair and the decision not to change his cabinet, these dilemmas are familiar to most readers. Mr. Morris offers a conventional historical analysis of these problems. The reader feels like applauding Lincoln as he springs a trap for his conniving Secretary of the Treasury, Salmon Chase, as the decision not to change the cabinet is recounted.

Empathy with one's subject can be a danger for authors of biography but Mr. Morris has written an evenhanded account. He mentions that Lincoln was often melancholic, lacked close friends, and did not like to talk about his past. Overall, however, the account of the six decisions made by Lincoln reinforce the legend. Lincoln is portrayed as an enigmatic figure: shrewd, yet humble and forgiving; believing in God, yet not practicing any religion; seeking advice, yet staying aloof and lonely.

Morris observes that, superficially, "few men have come to the office of president of the United States less qualified for it than Abraham Lincoln." Lincoln lacked national political experience (except for one term in the house of representatives); he lacked administrative experience, and had "never supervised a single employee;" he lacked military experience. Hindsight blinds us to the fact that Lincoln was really a neophyte, and Mr. Morris draws an interesting contrast between Lincoln's lack of experience in office and his potential.

The Lincoln Way is competently written, indexed, and profusely illustrated with color and black and white paintings, cartoons, maps, and photographs. Several minor quibbles: the illustrations, although captioned, do not provide full identification; illustrations from several

famous paintings were cropped to their detriment. For example, on pages 105-106 the illustration is a painting captioned "General Ulysses S. Grant and his men." This is Ole Peter Hansen Balling's famous painting of Grant and his generals, who all sat for their portraits, and five of them on the extreme left hand side of the painting, including George Armstrong Custer, are cropped out. The publisher indicates this title is for grade five and up. However, I chose a page at random, analyzed it with my word processor, and found a readability of grade eight and up.

The FDR Way is very comparable to the Lincoln Way. In fact, the three page introduction, discussing the importance of Presidential decisions, is the same text. A crucial decision for the author was picking only six of Roosevelt's many decisions.

The physical format and layout of this title are consistent with *The Lincoln Way*. The first six chapters take Roosevelt from his boyhood home of Hyde Park to his inauguration. Remaining chapters delve into his decision making. The six decisions chosen include: the first hundred days; fighting for social security; packing the supreme court; trading destroyers for bases; seeking a third term; and creating the United Nations. Again, as with the Lincoln title in this series, the author is generally laudatory, but does show Roosevelt making mistakes, particularly with respect to his attempt to pack the Supreme Court. Only an understated allusion is made to Roosevelt's marital problems.

u Quality - 4 § Acceptability - 5

David W. Rash
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Everett, Washington

973.917. Schuman, Michael A. *Eleanor Roosevelt : First Lady and Humanitarian*. (People to Know). Enslow Publishers, 1995. ISBN 0894905473. Hardbound, \$18.95. Gr. 8 - Adult.

How does a person born to wealth and status end up with the title "First Lady of the World"? Michael A. Schuman takes the reader on a whirlwind tour of the life of Anna Eleanor Roosevelt in his book, *Eleanor Roosevelt : First Lady and Humanitarian*. Tragedy struck often and close to home: the death of her mother in 1892, the death of her father just two years later, the death of an infant son, the debilitation of her husband, Franklin. Yet these calamities became steel in the character of this remarkable woman.

Born on October 14, 1884, in New York City, Eleanor was raised by a strict code: with money comes the responsibility to assist the poor. And that became her life's mission, whether it was teaching exercise and dance to the girls in Lower East Side, at College Settlement, or visiting the miners in West Virginia. Lobbying for better conditions, or negotiating with Castro for the return of prisoners following the Bay of Pigs

incident, or hammering out the structure for the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" which was adopted in 1948, Mrs. Roosevelt was always true to her calling. Eleanor Roosevelt was truly a fascinating woman, always topping the polls of the most influential people for the last forty years of her life.

The layout of the book itself is student-friendly. Included are a chronology, a list of places to visit, chapter Notes, further reading list and index. This format is similar to other volumes in the "People to Know" series. The author uses a non-nonsense, compact style, with emphasis on facts. The snippets of letters and photographs add a touch of humanity to the recounting of American history. However, the short paragraphs lend to a choppy style of writing.

u Quality - 3 § Acceptability - 4

Su Hagerty

Freelance Writer

Issaquah, Washington

979.7. Cocks, William. *A Historical Album of Washington*. (Historical Albums). The Millbrook Press, 1995. ISBN 1562948512. Paperbound, \$6.95. ISBN 1562945084. Hardbound, \$16.90. Gr. 4 - Adult.

The "Evergreen State" or "Chinook State" are only two of the many names that could be used to describe the diverse state of Washington. Known for salmon, apples, airplanes, and Mt. St. Helens, a short list and only a beginning, Washington State is a land of many contrasts. With natural pristine beauty and the artificial intelligence technology of a fast growing computer industry examples of her converse attractions.

A Historical Album of Washington is an overview of the state's history, touching on every major event that influenced her and made her the place she is today. From the original inhabitants and early exploration of her vast resources, coming full circle to safeguarding those same resources, a distinct part of her uniqueness as the 42nd state.

Many of the facts are well known to anyone with a slight knowledge of the state, including the introduction of missionaries to the territory and the traumatic Whitman massacre that resulted from the clash of two distinct cultures. Washington's involvement in the pipeline of supplies for the Alaska gold rush and her critical part in boat and airplane manufacturing during the 1st and 2nd world wars. But there are hidden among these great tragedies and triumphs many lesser known events in her past.

The photos, maps and drawings illustrate the varied aspects of the people, places and events to enhance the text. In the back of the book a glossary type section offers quick facts, statistical information, places, and a key events timeline. There is even a listing of well known personalities that have come from Washington.

If you could have only one resource on Washington that would appeal to all age levels, this is laid out well and offers a very solid sense of the state. The series contains such books on twenty states at this time, with more to come. The newest titles are Georgia and Michigan.

u Quality - 5 § Acceptability - 5

Jannet Hoeffner

Freelance Writer

Prairie City, Oregon

- Addy's Surprise.....30
 Adventures of Taxi Dog14
 Ainesworth Prowler53
 Amazing Story of Creation.....33
 American Inventors of the 20th... ..45
 Ancient Egypt.....50
 Ancient Greece.....50
 Aryan58
 Behind the Scenes at the Ballet49
 Believing Sophie26
 Betrayed63
 Black Dragon65
 Blown Away17
 Bound for the Promised Land81
 Brentwood57
 Bridesmaid Blues for Becky31
 Bumper and Noah.....16
 Call me Graywolf60
 Caught.....64
 Changing Times27
 Children of Bolivia.....52
 Children of the King.....29
 Chinook Christmas32
 Christ in Christmas.....74
 Christ in Easter74
 Christmas in the Big House... ..51
 Christmas Menorahs.....36
 Christy : A Closer Walk.....55
 City of Dragons22
 Colors of Christmas19
 Columbus & Cortez.....81
 Comedy of Errors.....57
 Coming to America36
 Connie Came to Play22
 Cougar Cove.....28
 Courage by Darkness29
 Courage Seed30
 Cowboy.....45
 Cowboys in the Old West.....79
 Cranky Blue Crab.....22
 Danger at Echo Cliffs.....25
 Dangerous Devices.....54
 Dangerous Game60
 Darkness over Covenant.....56
 David Livingstone34
 Doomsday Flight71
 Dorothea Lange47
 Double Trouble for Jess McColl31
 Dream Voyager.....59
 Earthquake Terror27
 Earthquakes77
 Eleanor Roosevelt.....82
 Empress and the Silkworm16
 Experiments with Balloons39
 Experiments with Bubbles39
 Experiments with Light and Mirrors39
 Experiments with Motion.....39
 Eye on the Wild48
 Fairy Tales of Hans Christian Andersen37
 False Coin, True Coin55
 Farmyard Animals16
 Felicity's Surprise30
 Fields of Glory69
 Final Chapter of Chance McCall64
 Fisherman's Lady68
 Flicka, Ricka, Dicka...Big Red Hen.....18
 Flicka, Ricka, Dicka...Their New Friend....18
 Flying Pie and Other Stories24
 Frog Power29
 Garden of Virtues74
 Gathering Dawn67
 Gathering Storm65
 Giver59
 Going to the Fair29
 Grandma Stepped on Fred15
 Great American Statesmen and Heroes81
 Happy Birthday, Kirsten!30
 Heart of a Stranger66
 Heart of a Tiger14
 Heat and Cold.....39
 Heaven Help Us!72
 Help! My Child Isn't Learning77
 Homemade Business78
 Hope26
 House Beyond Congo Cross53
 House Full of Friends.....76
 How and When to Tell Your Kids.....78
 How and Why of Home Schooling77
 How Sweet the Sound48
 Hudson Taylor34
 I Can Make a Rainbow.....46
 I Hate English!18
 If I Had Lived in Jesus' Time.....16
 If You Should Hear a Honey Guide.....45
 In the Midst of Lions68
 Inside-out Grandma20
 Jacob of Canaan71
 Jamestown67
 John F. Kennedy79
 Journey of Choices27
 Just in Case You Ever Wonder.....18
 Kansas.....51
 Kashanka25
 Kermit and Robin's Scary Story.....19
 Kindled Flame67
 Landing Place58
 Leonard Berstein48
 Life and Times of the Apostle Paul72
 Life During the French Revolution79
 Life in an Eskimo Village79
 Life in the Ancient Greece79
 Life in the Warsaw Ghetto79
 Life in War-torn Bosnia79
 Life on a Medieval Pilgrimage79
 Life on an Israeli Kibbutz79
 Light and Sound39
 Light Weaver59
 Lion Storyteller Bible.....33
 Looking Through the Window34
 Lost Kingdom.....58
 Lullaby Babes.....15
 Machines.....39
 Madam C. J. Walker.....37
 Mandie and her Missing Kin28
 Mandie and Joe's Christmas Surprise28
 Maria Montessori76
 Mario's Big Question30
 Marquis' Secret.....68
 Martin Luther34
 Martin Luther King, Jr.76
 Mary and Martha33
 Mary Cassatt.....47
 Mary Marony and the Chocolate... ..27
 Matter and Materials39
 Measures of Grace64
 Melanie and the Modeling Mess31
 Memory Box.....14
 Mice of the Herring Bone25
 Mike's Lonely Summer30
 Mimi's Tutu.....21
 Miss Piggy's Night Out17
 Monet48
 Mother Teresa.....34
 Mouse Bride15
 Mouse in Solomon's House21
 Mthunzi's Reed Mats35
 My Brother, Ant15
 My Dad's a Wizard!19
 My Mom Is Magic!19
 My Very Own Birthday46
 My Very Own Mother's Day46
 Mystery of Case D. Luc29
 New England Whaler45
 Nicole's Story37
 Night Sky39
 No Grown-ups Allowed29
 Nursery Bedtime Book.....20
 Nursery Quiet & Noisy Book19
 Nutcracker Ballet21
 O Is for Orca.....38
 Of Eagles and Ravens62
 Ollie Knows Everything.....17
 Ordeal at Iron Mountain70
 Orphans and the Ravens.....75
 Outside Doctor on Call.....34
 OUTside INside Poems49
 Papa Gatto38
 Paradise War59
 Pastwatch54
 Peanut Butter Cookbook for Kids46
 Pilgrim Village Mystery32
 Plays for Young Audiences50
 Pocahontas56
 Polar Express21
 Portrait of a Farm Family.....37
 Proving Ground65
 Pueblo Indian45
 Pulling Together32
 Quilt-block History of Pioneer Days.....47
 Raoul Wallenberg80
 Reagan Way82
 Rebel.....57
 Red Wolf Country.....18
 Rescued From the River.....15
 Return65
 Rhode Island.....51
 Roanoke67
 Ross Perot.....82
 Safari Animals16
 Safe at Home24
 Sailaway Home.....15
 Saint Francis.....36
 Scarlet Thread.....70
 Scientists of Faith77
 Sea Lion Called Salena26
 Search for Lost Fathering.....76
 Search for the King62
 Seasons39
 Secret of Telfair Inn24
 Secret of the Old House24
 Seize The Moment, Share the Message.....73
 Seven Blind Mice.....38
 Shadow of the Red Moon62
 She's Wearing a Dead Bird on Her Head! ..28
 Shelter Folks.....28
 Sheriff at Waterstop31
 Silent Thief53
 Sky in Silver Lace58
 Snap!.....22
 Sodbuster45
 Sojourner Truth.....75
 Some Summer!.....32
 Songs from the Loom.....47
 Songs of Our Ancestors50
 Spread of Islam.....79
 Stars in Their Courses69
 String Too Short to be Saved66
 Sweet, Sweet Basket25
 Tanya's Reunion25
 Tempering Blaze.....67
 That the World May Know72
 The Music Box Test26
 They Didn't Use Their Heads.....21
 This Too Shall Pass74
 Time to Weep61
 To Live Again70
 Toby the Tabby Kitten46
 Toby's Big Truck Adventure31
 Tommy's Mommy's Fish22
 Treasure of Pawley's Island56
 Treasured Friendship64
 True Adventure of Daniel Hall.....50
 Turnabout Paul Storybook35
 Turnip23
 Uncle Jed's Barbershop19
 United States in the 20th Century81
 Vanishing Clues61
 Veiled Threats70
 Walk Two Moons55
 Wall of Fire69
 Walt Disney's Alice in Wonderland20
 War Canoe54
 Water Brought Us.....82
 Way We Work.....78
 Wee Sing More Bible Songs34
 Welcome to the Sea of Sand39
 Wells of Glory68
 Whales20
 When I Grow Up I Can Go.....35
 When I Left My Village.....31
 When the Frost is on the Punkin50
 When This Cruel War Is Over51
 Where Hope Shines Through.....70
 White Orchids.....57
 Who Comes?.....49
 Winds of Graystone Manor66
 Wish You Were Here!.....27
 With Daring Faith.....75
 Wonderful Alexander and the Catwings17
 Wreck of the Zanzibar60
 Year of the Ranch.....18
 You Can Change the World35
 You Gotta Believe!.....79
 Young Author's Do-it-yourself Book33
 Your Home Is a Learning Place78
 Zamperini75

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Ackerman, Susan Yoder | 24 | Fisher, Chris | 19 | Leigh, Tom | 17, 19 | Rosales, Melodye | 30 |
| Adoff, Arnold | 49 | Flournoy, Valerie | 25 | Leppard, Lois Gladys | 28 | Rothenberg, Joan | 20 |
| Albrecht, Peggy | 24, 53 | Fradin, Dennis Brindell | 51 | Levine, Abby | 17 | Rubel, David | 81 |
| Aldape, Virginia Totorica | 37 | Fradin, Judith Bloom | 51 | Levine, Ellen | 18 | Rumford, Mary | 15 |
| Alex, Ben | 34 | Francis, Julia | 75 | Lewis, Beverly | 29 | Rushford, Patricia H. | 63 |
| Altman, Linda Jacobs | 79 | Frank, Marjorie | 46 | Lindman, Maj | 18 | Ryan, Susannah | 36 |
| Andersen, Hans Christian | 37 | Freedman, Russell | 82 | Locke, Thomas | 59 | Rylant, Cynthia | 20 |
| Anderson, Peggy King | 24 | Fryer, George | 39 | London, Jonathan | 18 | Sanderson, Ruth | 38 |
| Andreasen, Dan | 30 | Gaeddert, Louann | 26 | Lott, Sheena | 29 | Sattgast, L. J. | 20 |
| Arnold, Marsha Diane | 14 | Gaetz, Dayle | 26 | Lowry, Lois | 59 | Sayre, April Pulley | 45 |
| Baer, Judy | 53 | Gardner, Robert | 39 | Lucado, Max | 18, 29 | Schaller, James L. | 76 |
| Bahr, Mary | 14 | Gilchrist, Jan Spivey | 21 | MacDonald, George | 68 | Schindler, S. D. | 17, 45 |
| Baldwin, Robert F. | 45 | Gish, Duane T. | 33 | MacKinnon, Debbie | 39 | Schloredt, Valerie | 76 |
| Ball, Charles Ferguson | 72 | Goffe, Toni | 29 | Maestro, Betsy | 36 | Schulte, Elaine L. | 31 |
| Ballmann, Ray E. | 77 | Gompf, Ray | 46 | Maguire, Kerry | 48 | Schur, Maxine Rose | 31 |
| Bare, Colleen Stanley | 46 | Graef, Renée | 30 | Martin, Grant | 77 | Seaberg, Gayle | 46 |
| Barracca, Debra | 14 | Graves, Dan | 77 | Mason, Antony | 48 | Shaw, Janet | 30 |
| Barracca, Sal | 14 | Graystone, Peter | 16 | Massi, Jeri | 29, 60 | Shinn, George | 79 |
| Baum, Ann | 30 | Green, Jen | 48 | Mateu, Franc | 20 | Sieveking, Anthea | 39 |
| Beall, Pamela Conn | 34 | Groseclose, Kel | 74 | Mauterer, Erin | 32 | Simon, Frank | 70 |
| Bender, Carrie | 64 | Guthrie, Donna | 33 | McFarlane, Sheryl | 29 | Simont, Marc | 15 |
| Bial, Raymond | 37 | Halford, Celia Childress | 56 | McKissack, Fredrick | 75 | Sims, Blanche | 27 |
| Bjorkman, Steve | 18 | Hall, Donald | 66 | McKissack, Fredrick | 51 | Slater, Teddy | 20 |
| Blackwell, Lawana | 64 | Hanes, Mari Dunagan | 56 | McKissack, Patricia C. | 51 | Smith, Cat Bowman | 33 |
| Bly, Stephen A. | 64 | Hannon, Holly | 20 | McKissack, Patricia C. | 75 | Souci, Daniel San | 18 |
| Bodie, Idella | 24 | Harris, Geraldine | 50 | McLerran, Alice | 18 | Spatt, Leslie E. | 49 |
| Boelts, Maribeth | 15 | Hartman, Bob | 33 | McReynolds, Mary | 68 | Spears-Stewart, Reta | 31 |
| Branch, Muriel Miller | 82 | Hartman, Marty | 32 | Mendenhall, Cheryl | 35 | Spirin, Gennadi | 25 |
| Bray, Marian | 25 | Hawkins, Kathy | 66 | Metzler, Jack | 60 | Stanley, Diane | 50 |
| Bredeson, Carmen | 82 | Henterly, Jamichael | 14 | Meyer, Susan | 35 | Steptoe, John | 49 |
| Brent, Isabelle | 37 | Hermes, Jules | 52 | Millard, Catherine | 81 | Stewart, Ed | 71 |
| Brown, Dennis L. | 25 | Hess, Paul | 16 | Mitchell, Margaree King | 19 | Stewart, Gail B. | 79 |
| Bryson, Jamie S. | 54 | Higgins, Caroline | 34 | Mitchell, Sara | 68 | Stover, Jo Ann | 21 |
| Bunn, T. Davis | 54 | Hill, Grace Livingston | 57 | More, David | 32 | Sullivan, Don | 15 |
| Bush, Max | 50 | Hockett, Betty M. | 34 | Morpurgo, Michael | 60 | Tang, Charles | 32 |
| Byars, Betsy | 15 | Hoehne, Marcia | 26 | Morris Jeffrey | 82 | Tenud, Tish | 19, 20 |
| Card, Orson Scott | 54 | Hoff, B. J. | 66 | Morris, Gilbert | 61, 69 | Thomas, Jacqui | 16 |
| Carlyle, Linda Porter | 15 | Hollingsworth, Mary | 16 | Munsinger, Lynn | 17 | Thomas, Mack | 21 |
| Catrow, David | 28 | Holman, Andrea | 38 | Muntean, Michaela | 19 | Thomassie, Tynia | 21 |
| Chandra, Deborah | 49 | Hong, Lily Toy | 16 | Myers, Christopher | 62 | Thompson, John | 51 |
| Chartier, Normand | 21 | House, Jamie | 35 | Myers, Walter Dean | 62 | Thomson, Andy | 31 |
| Chekhov, Anton Pavlovich | 25 | Hudson, Cheryl | 48 | Nardo, Don | 79 | Tobias, Cynthia Ulrich | 78 |
| Christiana, David | 15 | Hudson, Wade | 48 | Naylor, Kathryn | 17 | Toby, Marlene | 37, 48 |
| Clary, Margie Willis | 25 | Hughes, Andrew | 48 | Nicholson, Michael | 80 | Toht, David W. | 45 |
| Cobb, Mary | 47 | Hunt, Angela Elwell | 67 | Nipp, Susan Hagen | 34 | Tripp, Valerie | 30 |
| Cohn, Janice | 36 | Hunter, Sara Hoagland | 17 | Nystrom, Carolyn | 30 | Tseng, Jean | 22 |
| Cole, Michael D. | 79 | Hutchins, Hazel | 26 | O'Dell, Tommy | 62 | Tseng, Mou-sien | 22 |
| Colson, Charles | 74 | Hutchinson, Sascha | 22 | Partow, Donna | 78 | Turcotte, Mark | 50 |
| Cooper, Floyd | 48 | Jeffrey, Laura S. | 45 | Paul, Diane | 26 | Turner, Robyn Montana | 47 |
| Cooper, Michael L. | 81 | Johnson, Grace | 57 | Peterson, Nancy Garnett | 30 | Urbanovic, Jackie | 46 |
| Cory, Steven | 45 | Johnson, Lissa Halls | 57 | Pflug, Kathy | 32 | Vagin, Vladimir | 21 |
| Cowley, Joy | 15 | Johnstone, Jill | 35 | Phifer, Martha Nelson | 19 | Van Allsburg, Chris | 21 |
| Crawford, Dianna | 67 | Jones, Brenna B. | 78 | Phillip, Neil | 37 | Vander Laan, Raynard | 72 |
| Creech, Sharon | 55 | Jones, Jan Naimo | 28 | Phillips, Michael R. | 68 | Vandevenne, Jean | 32 |
| Cunningham, David | 14 | Jones, Stanton L. | 78 | Pinkney, Brian | 31 | Vaughan, Marcia | 22 |
| Daly, Kimberly Austin | 39 | Kehret, Peg | 27 | Pinkney, Jerry | 25 | Walker, Sally M. | 77 |
| Damon, Duane | 51 | Kelly, Clint | 58 | Place, François | 60 | Walsh, Jill Paton | 22 |
| Davis, Rebecca Henry | 75 | Kerrod, Robin | 39 | Pollard, Michael | 76 | Warner, Gertrude Chandler | 32 |
| Davis, Tim | 25 | Klausmeier, Robert | 45 | Poole, Susie | 33 | Watkins, Dawn L. | 22, 32 |
| Davis, Timothy N. | 22, 31 | Klein, Nancy Spence | 34 | Porter, Connie | 30 | Watson, Nancy Dingman | 22 |
| Davis, W. E. | 65 | Klein, Robin | 58 | Powell, Anton | 50 | Watson, Thomas Aldren Dingman | 22 |
| Degen, Bruce | 15 | Kline, Suzy | 27 | Powell, David | 28 | Weinberg, Pamela | 78 |
| Dick, Lois Hoadley | 55 | Korach, Mimi | 66 | Presnell, Kathleen S. | 50 | West, Robin | 46 |
| Dobson, James C. | 74 | Kossacoff, Lillian S. | 37 | Rader, Laura | 23 | Whalin, Terry | 35 |
| Donohue, Dorothy | 26 | Kroll, Virginia | 28 | Ralph, Judy | 46 | Wiebe, Rudy | 32 |
| Dunlap, Julie | 48 | Kuhne, Roberta | 73 | Ransome, James | 19 | Wildsmith, Brian | 36 |
| Dunn, John | 79 | Kuperminc, Gabriel | 82 | Rao, Linda Rae | 62, 70 | Williams, Michael E. | 35 |
| Edgar, Maxwell | 81 | Lafferty, Peter | 39 | Rava, Giuseppe | 34 | Winner, David | 80 |
| Edwards, Gene | 65 | Laity, Sally | 67 | Regan, Laura | 39 | Wolfe, Art | 38 |
| Eidsmoe, John | 81 | Lambert, Stephen | 22 | Rich, Scharlotte | 19 | Wood, Helen | 71 |
| Ellis, Jan Davey | 47 | Lang, Glenna | 50 | Richardson, Jean | 30 | Yancey, Louise | 24 |
| Ellis, Roger | 50 | Lasky, Kathryn | 28 | Riley, James Whitcomb | 50 | Yates, Susan Alexander | 76 |
| Engel, Jim | 35 | Lawhead, Stephen | 59 | Riols, Noreen | 70 | Yep, Laurence | 22 |
| Erickson, Richard | 45 | Lawson, Julie | 17, 28 | Rivers, Francine | 70 | Yolen, Jane | 39 |
| Eyer, William J. | 56 | Lawson, Steven J. | 72 | Roberts, Judy I. | 19 | Young, Ed | 38 |
| Farnsworth, Bill | 36 | Le Guin, Ursula K. | 17 | Roche, Hannah | 19 | Ziefert, Harriet | 23 |
| Figley, Marty Rhodes | 33 | Lee, Katie | 49 | Roessel, Marty | 47 | | |

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