

LASTING  
CONNECTIONS

of 2005

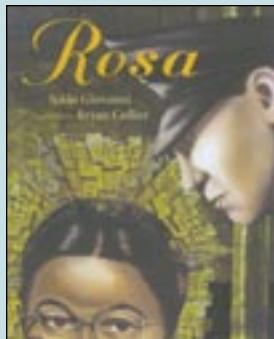
by Laura Tillotson

Another year has passed, and it's time to pick our favorite 2005 books with strong ties to the curriculum. The 30 titles below are outstanding, with compelling writing, extraordinary art, and an engaging presentation of information. They all have strong possibilities for classroom use but could also be read or shared just for fun.

## Picture Books

Ehlert, Lois. *Leaf Man*. 2005. 32p. Harcourt, \$16 (0-15-205304-2).

Preschool–Gr. 3. In this fanciful tale of a roving Leaf Man (who is shown on the first page but then disappears for most of the story), Ehlert's brilliant collage artwork assumes the reds, golds, oranges, and browns of fall



as it depicts his journey through marshes and fields, orchards and meadows. Young

readers and listeners will enjoy spotting chickens, vegetables, cows, fish, and butterflies, all created from autumn leaves Ehlert collected and photographed in her travels around the country. Colorful cut-out vistas on oversize double-page spreads change with each turn of the page, cleverly portraying the different landscapes in Leaf Man's travels. The story ends with the appearance of a Leaf Lady (look closely!), and a page of labeled leaves and "mystery leaves" wraps up this autumnal wonder, another winner from Ehlert.

Giovanni, Nikki. *Rosa*.

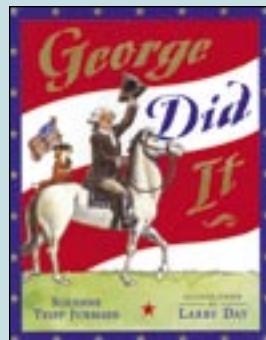
Illus. by Bryan Collier. 2005. 40p. Holt, \$16.95 (0-8050-7106-7).

Gr. 2–4. Collier's radiant, textured collages and Giovanni's dramatic prose portray the quiet courage and strong convictions behind Rosa Parks' act of civil disobedience. This stunning picture book gives a glimpse into her life as a seamstress, daughter, and wife, but primarily emphasizes her role as an activist and includes the important

part that the Women's Political Council played in turning Rosa's arrest into a unified bus boycott. A striking four-page fold-out spread depicts an endless procession of people walking, not riding, and also hints at the many marches to come in the civil rights movement. This stirring tribute will make an effective introduction to the civil rights era and could also be paired with more in-depth biographies of Parks' life.

Jurmain, Suzanne Tripp. *George Did It*. Illus. by Larry Day. 2005. 40p. Dutton, \$16.99 (0-525-47560-5).

Gr. 2–4. As in Deborah Chandra and Madeleine Comora's *George Washington's Teeth*, this comic picture book relates a little-known fact about our first founding father: "When Americans asked George to be the first president of the brand-new United States of America, George said, 'NO, THANK YOU!'" Of course, 57-year-old



George eventually took the job after running unopposed, though nothing filled him with "greater anxiety." Day's energetic, cartoonlike illustrations humorously portray George's

reluctance, showing him besieged by supporters outside the dentist's office, worriedly peering at the president-to-be's desk, and doggedly practicing his inaugural speech while Martha attempts to latch his traveling trunk. Jurmain's lighthearted telling includes some remarkable facts: George had to take out a loan from a neighbor to pay for the inauguration trip; at Federal Hall, Congress had to borrow a copy of the Bible at the last minute for George to swear on. A selected bibliography and an author's note are included in this enlightening story that lends personality to a revered historical figure.

Lear, Edward. *A Was Once an Apple Pie*. Illus. by Suse MacDonald. 2005. 32p. Orchard, \$12.99 (0-439-66056-4).

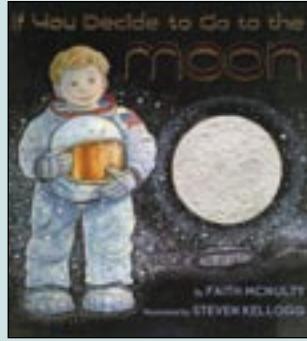
Preschool–Gr. 2. First published in 1871, Lear's bouncy alphabet poem is a delight to read aloud and sounds a lot like verbal skipping: "A was once an apple pie, / pidy, widy, tidy, pidy, / nice insidy

apple pie!" Here the nonsense rhymes get even more of a boost from MacDonald's colorful, graphic illustrations—bold images set against a white background that often combine the verses' subjects into a unifying scene: the owl (*O*) sits on a nest (*N*), and the turkey (*T*) runs away from the skunk (*S*). Well worth adding to the ABC bookshelves, this rollicking nonsense poem will be a storytime favorite.

McNulty, Faith. *If You Decide to Go to the Moon*. Illus. by Steven Kellogg. 2005. 48p. Scholastic, \$16.99 (0-590-48359-5).

Preschool–Gr. 3. McNulty's lively, practical guide for undertaking a trip

to the moon is as much a tribute to the wonders of Earth as it is a description of its satellite. A young boy prepares for his solo journey by rocket and blasts off for the two-and-a-half day trip. McNulty warns, "Up here in space you may feel very alone. . . . This is the time to play some cheerful music, eat a peanut



butter sandwich." Along the way, readers learn about the effects of weightlessness, the extreme atmosphere of the moon ("Without a space suit, you would sizzle or freeze"), and the first astronauts who traveled there. Kellogg's textured paintings dramatically portray the lifeless landscape of the moon and the vibrancy of Earth; a fold-out four-page spread is a beautiful tribute to the astounding variety of environments and animals found on our planet. An appealing book for science units or storytime, or both.

O'Malley, Kevin. *Once upon a Cool Motorcycle Dude*. Illus. by Scott Goto, Carol Heyer, and Kevin O'Malley. 2005. 32p. Walker, \$16.95 (0-8027-8947-1).

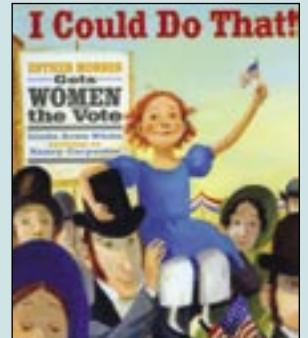
Gr. 2–6. When asked to retell a fairy tale for a library project, a boy and girl narrator can't agree on a story and decide to make one up. The resulting "he said, she said" tale involves Princess Tenderheart and eight beautiful ponies, as well as a cool motorcycle dude and an evil giant whose "breath smelled like rotten, moldy, stinky, wet feet." The oversize paintings are a hoot: Heyer's princess is a



flower-bedecked vision in pinks and purples; Goto's muscled motorcycle dude roars across the page against a fiery backdrop; and O'Malley's dueling narrators argue over the story in the foreground. A natural for sharing in the classroom, this hilarious look at teamwork and the creative process will be relished by students and teachers alike.

White, Linda Arms. *I Could Do That! Esther Morris Gets Women the Vote*. Illus. by Nancy Carpenter. 2005. 40p. Farrar/Melanie Kroupa, \$16 (0-374-33527-3).

K–Gr. 3. Esther Morris helped the women of Wyoming get the vote and was the first female in the United States to hold public office, and her non-nonsense can-do attitude comes through marvelously in this spunky picture-book biography.

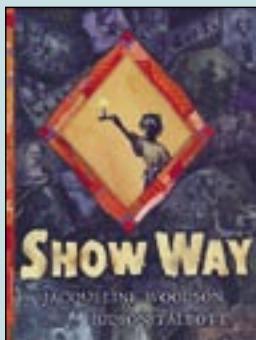


From Esther's years as a millinery shop owner in upstate New York, to her support of the abolition movement, through two marriages and three sons, White's account sprinkles the catchy "I could do that" refrain throughout. Esther's move at age 55 to Wyoming Territory gives her a new opportunity to show that "things that were not likely to happen, happened every day," and with tea and polite conversation, she helps women in the territory gain suffrage. Carpenter's animated paintings cheekily show the neighbors' puffed-up reactions to Esther's assertions, as well as her calm response. Delightful and fun, this true story invites readers to join in: "I could do that." An author's note and additional resources are included, as well as endpapers

listing dates when other states and territories gave women the vote.

Woodson, Jacqueline. *Show Way*. Illus. by Hudson Talbott. 2005. 48p. Putnam, \$16.99 (0-399-23749-6).

Gr. 3–6. “When Soonie’s great-grandma was seven, she was sold from the Virginia land to a plantation in South Carolina without her ma or pa,” begins this powerful family history. Following the women in her family from Soonie’s great-grandma to her daughter, Toshi, Woodson uses her own heritage to create a snapshot of African American history, and her ancestors’ skill at sewing “Show Ways” (quilts with secret maps for freedom-seeking slaves) reflects the theme of surviving through dark times. Talbott’s multimedia artwork masterfully incorporates quilting patterns (most visibly in the diamond-shaped cut-out cover) and includes pieces of muslin, workshirts, and bermuda shorts, while his stunning watercolors show the anguish of slavery and the triumphs of the civil rights movement. As an unforgettable vignette of personal history and a fine example of storytelling, this impressive picture book will find a home in the curriculum and beyond.



against Rules and Regulations, but once Toni V secretly starts reading it, he is caught up in the life of Pelly D, a teenage girl from the past who has it all—popularity, beauty, and an “offworld” pool, where she sits and soaks and dreams. But life becomes difficult and dangerous when Pelly D and her siblings and mother are forcibly tested for gene ancestry and tagged as Galrezi, the lowest clan in the gene pool. Alternating between Toni V’s monotonous back-breaking days and

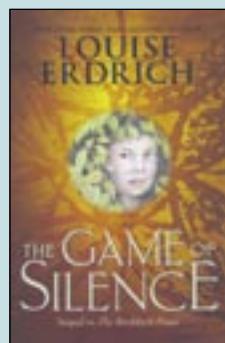
Pelly D’s indignant chronicle of eviction, restrictions, bombings, and eventual deportation, this chilling psychological novel raises issues of genocide, free will, and resistance, and Toni V’s awakening to government repression brings up more questions: Will he throw the diary away? How will he use his new knowledge of the carefully concealed past? The Holocaust connection is evident throughout, and readers will find much to ponder here.

Birdsall, Jeanne. *The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy*. 2005. 272p. Knopf, \$15.95 (0-375-83143-6).

Gr. 4–7. This endearing summer story follows the four Penderwick sisters through their vacation at Arundel, a magnificent estate in the Berkshires owned by the formidable Mrs. Tifton, where their widower father has rented a cottage. Oldest sister Rosalind falls for Cagney the teenage gardener; feisty Skye, the second oldest, befriends Jeffrey, Mrs. Tifton’s son; third sister Jane is working on her latest adventure book *Sabrina Starr Rescues a Boy*; and Batty, the youngest,

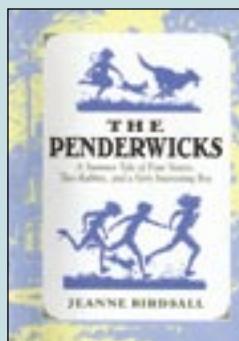
befriends two pet rabbits and has a run-in with a bull. As the summer passes, each of the sisters and Jeffrey share adventures together while individually experiencing the pains and pleasures of growing up. Though the villains (Mrs. Tifton and her boyfriend) may seem a bit too villainous at times, this charming, old-fashioned tale features witty dialogue and funny situations and will find many fans among young readers.

Erdrich, Louise. *The Game of Silence*. 2005. 256p. HarperCollins, \$15.99 (0-06-029789-1).



Gr. 4–7. The remarkable sequel to *The Birchbark House* continues the story of Omakayas, now nine years old, as she and the rest of her Ojibwe village are faced with forced removal from their homes on the shores of Lake Superior.

The movingly told chapters relate episodes involving Omakayas and her family and their last year on the Island of the Golden-Breasted Woodpecker: her brother Pinch joins a band of boy warriors led by Omakayas’ nemesis; her sister Angeline awaits the return of her beloved Fishtail after he sets out to discover more about *chimookomanag* (white) land agreements; her mother Yellow Kettle adopts a baby orphaned by another village’s forced removal; her father Deydey’s life is saved by



one of Omakayas’ special dreams; and her grandmother Nokomis helps her granddaughter learn to control her gift of dream knowledge. In this powerful novel of love and sorrow, loss and change, readers will mourn with Omakayas when she finally leaves her adored home but will also share her hope for the future.

## Novels

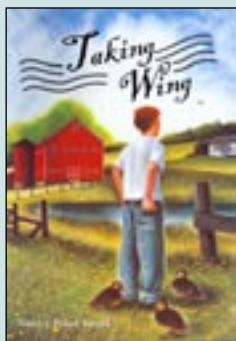
Adlington, L. J. *The Diary of Pelly D*. 2005. 288p. Greenwillow, \$15.99 (0-06-076615-8).

Gr. 7–10. Inspired by wartime journals, this disturbing futuristic story begins when 14-year-old Toni V, part of a postwar Demolition Crew, discovers a diary while drilling up the ruins of City Five. Keeping the diary is



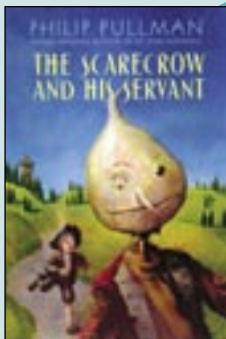
Graff, Nancy Price. *Taking Wing*. 2005. 224p. Clarion, \$15 (0-618-53591-8).

Gr. 5–8. Thirteen-year-old Gus Anslar has hardly gotten settled on his grandparents' farm in Vermont, where he's staying while his father trains to be a World War II pilot and his mother recuperates from TB, when his grandfather accidentally kills a nesting duck. Gus has grown up in Boston and doesn't know anything about hatching ducklings, but his grandmother convinces her husband to save the eggs and set up an incubator. Then Gus meets Louise Lavictoire, the oldest child in a French Canadian family living up the road, who wants to see a duckling hatch but whom Gus' grandparents are leery of—"The first time you catch her stealing something will be the last time she'll be welcome here." What follows is a captivating coming-of-age story that grapples with the meaning of family, the difficulties of having friends who are different, and Gus' realization of life's fragility—his ducks' lives, Louise's life when she returns to Canada with her family, and his life in Boston before war and sickness separated him from his parents. Yet as his grandmother tells him, there's always hope, which "would remind him of all the unexpected things he'd found and of the possibility that everything would turn out okay." With a well-delineated setting and memorable characters, this richly drawn historical novel with universal themes will stay with readers long after they finish the book.



Pullman, Philip. *The Scarecrow and His Servant*. Illus. by Peter Bailey. 2005. 240p. Knopf, \$15.95 (0-375-81531-7).

Gr. 4–7. The author of the sophis-

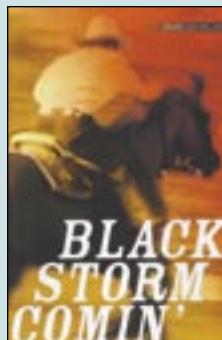


ticated His Dark Materials trilogy for older readers demonstrates his wide range in this suspenseful but lighthearted fantasy about an overconfident scarecrow and a young boy named Jack who becomes his devoted servant. With classic quest elements borrowed from *The Wizard of Oz* and other familiar tales, the story follows the duo as they encounter brigands, join the army, take to the stage, and as the Scarecrow falls in love with a broom, all while making their way toward Spring Valley, which the Scarecrow claims is rightfully his—"the farms, the wells, the fountains, the streams—all of it." What the two wanderers don't know is that the powerful, evil Buffaloni family is hot on their trail, eager to thwart the Scarecrow and claim Spring Valley for themselves. Droll black-and-white illustrations appear throughout this immensely entertaining story that culminates in a tongue-in-cheek courtroom trial and a dramatic victory for the endearing pair.

Wilson, Diane Lee. *Black Storm Comin'*. 2005. 304p. Simon & Schuster/Margaret K. McElderry, \$16.95 (0-689-04331-7).

Gr. 7–10. This rip-roaring Wild West adventure begins, "On the morning of September 16, 1860, my pa shot me." Unfortunately, that's only the start of 12-year-old Colton Wescott's family troubles on an ill-fated wagon train trip from Missouri to Sacramento. After the accidental shooting, Pa runs off, Colton's newborn baby brother stops taking milk, and Ma's childbed fever worsens. Fellow travelers can often be counted on for help, but because Ma is black, little aid comes to the Wescotts, and it's up to Colton and his two younger sisters to push the wagon through the scorching desert

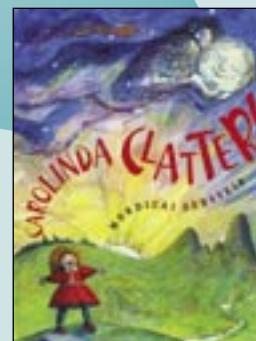
to the next town and a doctor before it's too late. With a plot that has as many twists and turns as the Sierra Nevada trail, Wilson places Colton's eventual job as a Pony Express rider in the context of the times, showing how essential coastal communication was in the face of the looming Civil War. Determined to succeed, Colton must also deal with his biracial background—he can pass for white, but by doing that is he denying his mother's heritage? How else will he manage to travel to Sacramento to deliver his aunt's freedom papers? Marked by a fresh, authentic, and funny voice, this rollicking historical novel is a page-turner.



## Folktales

Gerstein, Mordicai. *Carolinda Clatter!* 2005. 40p. Roaring Brook, \$16.95 (1-59643-063-X).

Preschool–Gr. 3. A lonely giant is in love with the moon, but she spurns his affections and ignores him. Heartbroken, the giant falls asleep, and after thousands and thousands of years, "his eyes became two ponds. His tears became two waterfalls. His beard and the hair on his head became forests." The people who settle on the mountain know about the giant, and they are careful not to wake him, but their lives are so quiet—no crying babies, no noisy animals, no laughing or singing. All that changes when Carolinda Clatter is born. She tries to be quiet, yet she can't help it: "I love NOISE!" she shouts, and in no time at all, the giant wakes up. In this original folktale, vivacious, fearless Carolinda tells the giant how much he is loved and sings him back to sleep, then



teaches the townspeople to put sound and music back into their lives. As in *What Charlie Heard*, Caldecott Medalist Gerstein's boisterous, joyful paintings physically show the richness and fullness of sound, from tweets and howls to Carolinda's bangs and clangs. Definitely not for silent reading, this spirited tale will turn up the volume during story hour.

Johnson-Davies, Denys. *Goha the Wise Fool*. Illus. by Hag Hamdy and Hany. 2005. 40p. Philomel, \$16.99 (0-399-24222-8).

K-Gr. 4. Sly, irrepressible, and sometimes foolish, Goha is an ancient Middle Eastern folklore figure as familiar in that part of the world as Brer Rabbit is in America. These 15 collected stories show Goha at his finest, whether he's buying back his own donkey after hearing the seller sing its praises or outsmarting uninvited visitors by selling their shoes at the market. Most stories are a page long, and each features a lively full-page fabric illustration sewn by two Cairo tentmakers, with simple rough-hewn backgrounds and colorful, comic depictions of Goha and his supporting cast. An afterword includes a picture of the illustrator team at work along with a brief description of the tentmakers' history and information about Goha himself. Well-conceived Middle Eastern story collections are few and far between, but even if they weren't a rarity, this wonderful picture book would still be well worth adding to the shelves.

Marcantonio, Patricia Santos. *Red Ridin' in the Hood and Other Cuentos*. Illus. by Renato Alarcão. 2005. 208p. Farrar, \$16 (0-374-36241-6).

Gr. 4-7. Marcantonio sets an

array of fairy tales and myths in the barrio, in the Mexican countryside, and even in the time of the Aztecs, giving each a clever Hispanic twist. In the title story, Roja takes a shortcut through Forest Street on her way to her *abuelita's* house and runs into Lobo Chávez in a low-rider Chevy. Snow White lives on a *rancho* and the dwarves are *vaqueritos* in "Blanca Nieves," and the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice

takes place in ancient Mexico City in "El Día de los Muertos." Alarcão's energetic full-page black-and-white illustrations appear throughout and range from funny to tender to scary. The morals of the stories occasionally overwhelm the narratives, but readers will have fun with this fractured collection—with plenty of lively dialogue, it would be appropriate for reader's theater as well. A glossary of Spanish words is included.

## Poetry

Cheng, Andrea. *Shanghai Messenger*. Illus. by Ed Young. 2005. 40p. Lee & Low, \$17.95 (1-58430-238-0).

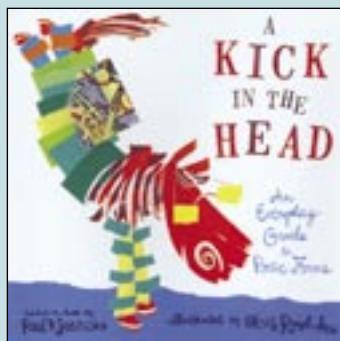
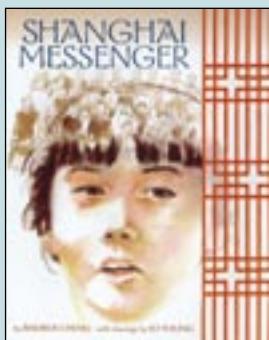
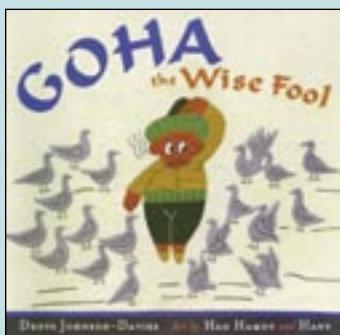
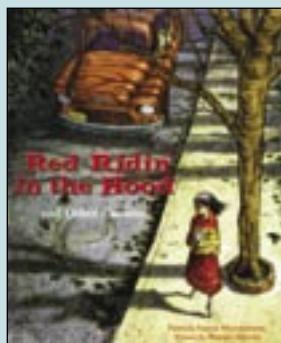
Gr. 2-6. Warm, soft pastels by Caldecott Medalist Young grace this lovely collection of free verse poems about a Chinese American girl's solo trip to Shanghai to visit her extended family. Xiao Mei hesitates when Grandma Nai tells her she's been invited: "In China / will people stare / at my eyes / with green flecks / like Dad's?" But when Nai Nai draws a family tree to tell her about her relatives—"Chang Fa, /

he helped me / in the war. / ... Uncle Hai Tao / has writing so beautiful / like our father."—Xiao Mei decides to be brave and go. After a sad parting and a long plane ride, Xiao Mei finds herself surrounded by aunts and uncles and cousins in Shanghai, and soon she's making wontons on Auntie's hot plate, visiting beautiful gardens where Great Grandfather carved words in stone, and learning tai chi from the

ladies in the park. All too soon, it is time to return home, and Xiao Mei realizes how hard it is to have family so far away: "Someday / we really will / eat dinner / all together." Cheng's lyrical verses, full of details about daily life in Shanghai, could inspire students to write their own poems about family near and far.

*A Kick in the Head: An Everyday Guide to Poetic Forms*. Edited by Paul B. Janeczko. Illus. by Chris Raschka. 2005. 64p. Candlewick, \$17.99 (0-7636-0662-6).

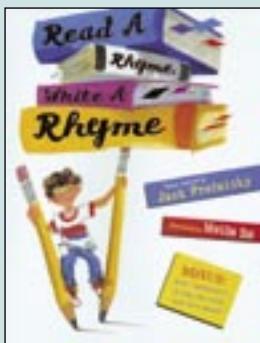
Gr. 4-8. This marvelous follow-up to Janeczko and Raschka's *A Poke in the I* is an accessible look at a variety of poetic forms, from the more familiar sonnet and limerick to lesser-known forms such as the clerihew (a poem that makes fun of a celebrity) and the aubade (a poem that "laments or celebrates the coming of the dawn"). With poems by both classic poets (Shakespeare and Ogden Nash) and contemporary writers (Kristine O'Connell George and many more), each page or two pages focuses on one form, with Raschka's stylistic multimedia illustrations boldly splashing across the white backgrounds. Comparing the constraints of poetic forms to rules in sports ("Imagine how much



less intriguing the game would be if there were no foul lines”), Janeczko provides a brief explanation of each form on the pages where the poems appear, in addition to “Notes on the Forms” at the end of the book. Perfect for classroom use, this terrific picture book will help students appreciate poetry and become better poets themselves.

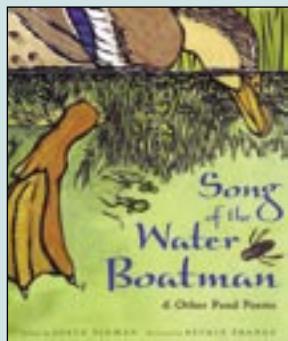
*Read a Rhyme, Write a Rhyme.* Edited by Jack Prelutsky. Illus. by Meilo So. 2005. 32p. Knopf, \$16.95 (0-375-82286-0).

Gr. 3–6. Prelutsky’s gift to the poetry teacher comes in the form of a picture book divided into 10 sections, each with three poems about a particular child-friendly subject, including dogs, food, weather, and birthdays, and penned by poets both past and present. What sets this appealing title apart are “poemstarts,” which appear in colored boxes in each section and consist of a few beginning lines of a poem on the same topic. Prelutsky invites readers to finish the poems and provides tips to help them get started, whether it’s a list of words that rhyme with a previous line, ideas of what to talk about in the continuing verses, or suggestions for what the mood of the poem might be. It’s easy to see how children will gain confidence in writing complete poems after trying their hands at finishing a poemstart, and So’s imaginative, exuberant paintings do a wonderful job of extending the ideas.



Sidman, Joyce. *Song of the Water Boatman and Other Pond Poems.* Illus. by Beckie Prange. 2005. 32p. Houghton, \$16 (0-618-13547-2).

Gr. 2–6. Whether describing cattails (“We burst forth / crisp green



squads / bristling with spears. / We encircle the pond.”) or addressing a dragonfly (“Perched on a reed stem / all night, shedding skin, you dry / your wings in moonlight.”), Sidman’s evocative, thoughtful poems joyfully portray pond life in all its rich, wet glory. With a variety of poetic forms

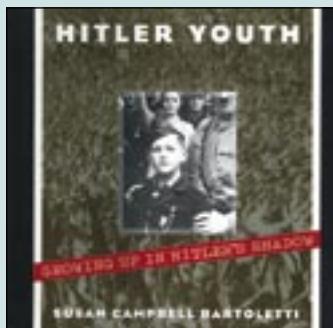
and ranging in tone from funny to somber, this fine collection features Prange’s oversize hand-colored woodcuts, whose thick black lines and greens and blues bring the pond’s flora and fauna to life. Additional information about the poems’ subjects appear in smaller type on each page, further illuminating concepts such as the food chain, metamorphosis, and the role of the seasons. A glossary rounds out this outstanding combination of poetry and science.

### Informational Books

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. *Hitler Youth: Growing Up in Hitler’s Shadow.* 2005. 176p. Scholastic Nonfiction, \$19.95 (0-439-35379-3).

Gr. 7–12. This spaciouly designed photo-essay with numerous black-and-white period photographs relates the absorbing stories of teenagers who suffered under, joined, or resisted Hitler Youth during that dictator’s reign of power and sheds light on the rise of the Nazi party, World War II, and the Holocaust. After describing how eager many German youths were to believe Hitler’s promises, Bartoletti skillfully shows how Nazi propaganda blitzed them on every front—in school, at rallies, and on the radio—until membership

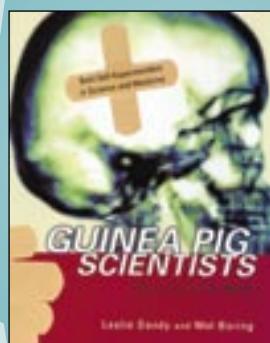
in Hitler Youth seemed practically irresistible. The extensively researched accounts set the terror of Hitler’s regime against the teens’ personal choices and beliefs, from Sophie Scholl and her brother Hans, who were beheaded for distributing anti-Nazi leaflets, to Alfons Heck, who enthusiastically led



a group of Hitler Youth against the Allies, to Bert Lewyn, a Jewish teen who narrowly escaped deportation. Perhaps most disturbing is the book’s conclusion, which describes the “de-Nazification” of young Germans after the war, who were often reluctant to accept the truth about Hitler and the Nazis. An epilogue describes what happened to the teens profiled, and a time line, source notes, bibliography, and more round out this gripping book.

Boring, Mel, and Leslie Dendy. *Guinea Pig Scientists: Bold Self-Experimenters in Science and Medicine.* Illus. by C. B. Mordan. 2005. 224p. Holt, \$19.95 (0-8050-7316-7).

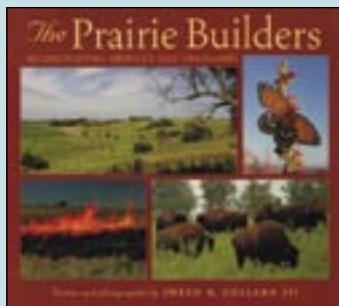
Gr. 5–9. Boring and Dendy take what could be a dry science topic—self-experimentation—and turn it into an engrossing narrative with irresistibly squeamish descriptions. Brave, driven scientists who baked themselves in rooms heated to 250 degrees (Charles Blagden), swallowed bones and shells (Lazzaro Spallanzani), and inhaled dangerous gases (Jack and John Haldane), all in the name of their calling, are included in this collection of 10 biographies accompanied by Mordan’s eye-catching black-and-white illustrations and diagrams and photos. Sidebars with related information appear throughout, and a “Now We Know”



section concludes each profile, listing the facts as we understand them now and improvements that occurred as a result of the experimenter's work. A chapter-by-chapter bibliography and a list of quotation sources are included in this volume that is useful for report writers and fascinating in its examination of scientific discovery.

Collard, Sneed B., III. *The Prairie Builders: Reconstructing America's Lost Grasslands*. 2005. 72p. Houghton, \$17 (0-618-39687-X).

Gr. 5–9. Striking full-color photographs, engaging text, and an open page design distinguish Collard's exceptional title about Iowa's Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge, where scientists and volunteers have attempted to create a native tallgrass prairie from scratch. Part of the Scientists in the Field series, this accessible photo-essay describes the daunting task of converting 8,000 acres of farmland into prairie, including the search for native seeds, the role of controlled burns in helping prairie plants thrive, the return of native wildlife to the area (including the rare regal fritillary butterfly as well as elk and bison), and the ongoing effort to increase biodiversity and improve the overall health of the refuge. Ideal for a study of ecosystems, life cycles, and the everyday work of scientists, this beautiful book includes two pages on schoolyard butterfly gardens as well as a list of related Web sites and a glossary.



Freedman, Russell. *Children of the Great Depression*. 2005. 128p. Clarion, \$20 (0-618-44630-3).

Gr. 5–9. This handsome photo-essay chronicling the plight of children during the Great Depression features Freedman's accessible, eloquent prose as well as period photos on every spread. Contemporary readers will be amazed at

the dramatic difference in that time period's standard of living compared with today's; for example, nearly 40 percent of American households in 1934 lacked a bathtub or shower. Photos of a sprawling Hooverville outside Seattle, a crowded city soup line, and an endless lineup of evicted sharecroppers will give readers pause and reinforce the desperate facts of the text. Freedman interweaves quotations throughout (many from letters First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt received from the nation's youth) that show firsthand how the depressed economy affected both poor and middle-class children. One teenage boy describes his father's "decommissioning" the family car, jacking it up on blocks until better times come.

Another boy says, "We stopped the evening paper, turned off the city water, . . . stopped ice and milk delivery, and disconnected our gas range." With chapters on school, working children, migrant workers, child hoboes, and the role of movies and the radio in daily life, Freedman compellingly chronicles this challenging time in America's history. Source notes for quotations, a selected bibliography, and an index are included.

Giblin, James Cross. *Good Brother, Bad Brother: The Story of Edwin Booth and John Wilkes Booth*. 2005. 256p. Clarion, \$22 (0-618-09642-6).

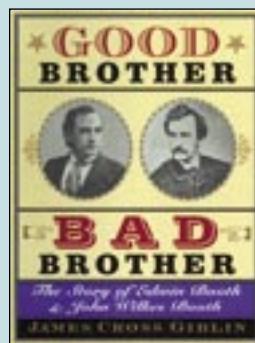
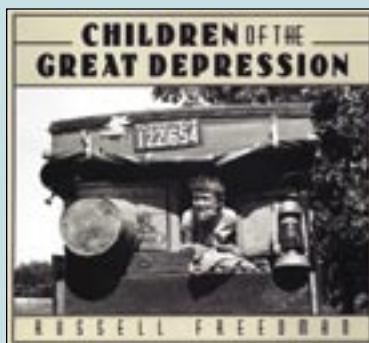
Gr. 6–12. Absorbing and engaging, Giblin's joint biography of John Wilkes Booth and Edwin Booth, two star stage actors from the 1850s onward whose renowned

actor-father Junius led them to their careers, traces the lives of the brothers as they take to the stage, take opposite sides in the Civil War, and as John Wilkes takes President Lincoln's life. Giblin tells of teenage Edwin's attempts to manage his mentally ill father during Junius' tours, of Edwin's grief at the death of his first wife, and of his long struggle with alcohol, as well as his success

and joy as an actor and father. John Wilkes' ascension to the stage is marked by an endless supply of lady admirers and a love for lavish costumes, drink, and excess, as well as a growing hatred for the North. The inevitable climax—John Wilkes' assassination of Lincoln—is suspenseful, as Giblin gives a step-by-step account of the various plots, the actual event, and the aftermath, including the threat of revenge that hung over the Booth family for years afterward. A wonderful extension to a study of the Civil War and its causes, this illuminating portrait includes period photographs, engravings, and other illustrations, as well as detailed source notes and a bibliography.

Krull, Kathleen. *Leonardo da Vinci*. Illus. by Boris Kulikov. 2005. 128p. Viking, \$15.99 (0-670-05920-X).

Gr. 5–8. In this first installment in the Giants of Science series of biographies, Krull employs a lively, conversational tone in showing how Leonardo da Vinci was as much a master scientist as a master painter, serving as a "bridge" between the medieval worldview and the scientific revolution. Outlining his childhood and career as an artist in Renaissance Italy, Krull concentrates on Leonardo's life as a designer and inventor

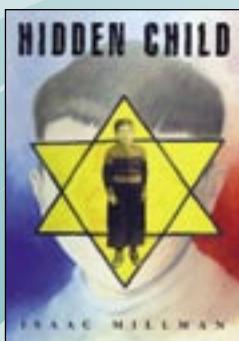


and introduces readers to his now-famous notebooks and his dream of publishing them as a “grand encyclopedia of scientific knowledge.” The physical details of the notebooks are incredible, and Leonardo’s explorations of “anatomy, optics, and anything to do with water” were far-reaching for his time. What Leonardo wasn’t so good at was follow-through, and after his death the notebooks, unpublished and poorly understood, gradually became scattered—it’s estimated that about half of the pages disappeared. Full-page black-and-white line drawings accompany an informative narrative that will change how readers think of Leonardo. Also included are descriptions of the existing notebooks and their locations, a bibliography of related books and Web sites, and an index.



Millman, Isaac. *Hidden Child*. 2005. 80p. Farrar/Frances Foster, \$18 (0-374-33071-9).

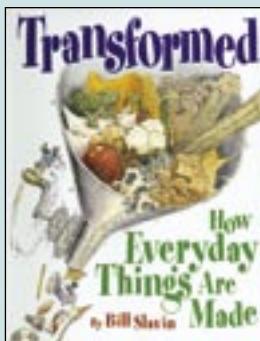
Gr. 5–9. In this stirring, heartbreaking, and utterly personal memoir, Millman relates the events of his childhood as a Jew in occupied France. Composite paintings on oversize double-page spreads show scenes described in the text, with captions such as “Papa waves goodbye to us from behind barbed wire” and “Each night I pray for Mama and Papa to come.” After being separated from his parents, Millman survives the war after a random encounter with Héna, a Jewish woman who ar-



ranges for him to go into hiding. The straightforward narrative is filled with details of daily life even as it tells of Millman’s harrowing escape, a fate that only he, one cousin, and one uncle shared. A spacious page design and numerous photos round out this astonishing Holocaust story.

Slavin, Bill. *Transformed: How Everyday Things Are Made*. 2005. 160p. Kids Can, \$24.95 (1-55337-179-8).

Gr. 4–up. Adults and children alike will appreciate this oversize, attractively designed book showing how more than 60 everyday objects are made. From pencils and CDs to plastic wrap, running shoes, and peanut butter, Slavin tackles each item on a double-page spread with a brief history of the object and clearly numbered step-by-step descriptions of its creation process. Colorful cartoon illustrations show a diminutive army of workers busily sawing, planing, and sandpapering (in the case of the surfboard), or boiling, spinning, and mixing (as with soap) in each composite



as “Fun and Games” and “Around the House,” the volume also includes a “Back to Basics” section that describes the origins of raw materials such as petroleum, aluminum, and plastic resins. This fascinating picture of modern manufacturing is

perfect for browsers, who will never look at dental floss, cat litter, or pasta the same way again.

Walker, Sally M. *Secrets of a Civil War Submarine: Solving the Mysteries of the H. L. Hunley*. 2005. 64p. Carolrhoda, \$18.95 (1-57505-830-8).

Gr. 5–9. Part history lesson, part scientific investigation, this intriguing photo-essay investigates the mystery of what caused a Civil War submarine to sink as well as detailing how it was raised and restored more than 130 years later. Beginning with a clear explanation of early submarine technology and the *Hunley*’s potential as a military weapon, Walker describes the sub’s construction and dramatically depicts its first successful—and fatal—mission,

when all hands perished. She then turns her attention to the twentieth-century search for the submarine, the ensuing controversy over who owned the fragile wreck when it was finally found in Charleston harbor, and the meticulous and painstaking recovery effort by a group of dedicated scientists and historians. Woven throughout are the absorbing stories of the crew, whose personal backgrounds were carefully pieced together by a



forensic genealogist and a forensic anthropologist. Walker’s enthusiasm for her subject will capture readers, and period illustrations, diagrams, and full-color photographs appear throughout, along with source notes and a glossary at the end of the book. ■