TOP 10 SUSTAINABILITY THEMED CHILDREN'S BOOKS 2020

Presenting the SustainRT Top 10 Children’s Books published last year! The American Library Association’s Sustainability Round Table Booklist Committee curates an annual list of 10 notable children’s books on nature, conservation, and communities that reflect the mission of SustainRT “to exchange ideas and opportunities regarding sustainability in order to move toward a more equitable, healthy, and economically viable society”. Check them out today!

FICTION

SEA BEAR
by Lindsay Moore
A story of climate change from the point of view of a polar bear. The art is beautiful, the language resonant and poetic. Focuses on themes of change, adaptability, and resilience. An appendix gives facts about arctic wildlife and discusses the reality of both seasonal and long-term changes in the environment. Age Range: 4 - 8 years; Grade Level: Preschool – 3

A STONE SAT STILL
by Brendan Wenzel
This quiet, thoughtful picture book, illustrated by the author with gentle humor, shows how a large stone can be perceived and remembered in many ways by different animals. It also demonstrates in a bittersweet way the changes that time brings in the environment of the stone. Age Range: 3 - 5 years; Grade Level: Preschool - K

LISTEN
by Holly M. McGhee. Illustrations by Pascal Lemaitre
A picture book that reads like poetry. A celebration of nature and how we can perceive it via our five senses and also our heart! It’s a timely reminder to practice mindfulness and to appreciate the world around us. Age Range: 4 - 7 years; Grade Level: Preschool - 2

THE HIKE
by Allison Farrell
This story follows three girls and their dog, as they go for a hike in a forest. A really unique book with delightful illustrations. Although it’s a work of fiction, there are plenty of labels to learn about the different animals, plants, constellations, and other surprises one can find when exploring deep in the forest. Age Range: 3 - 5 years; Grade Level: Preschool - K

YOU ARE HOME
by Evan Turk
Beautifully illustrated, often dusk or dawn scene with animals of that area, is this visual journey through our US National Parks, including a map showing all parks at the end. The author also acknowledges the irony of these parks as a place for everyone though they were once native lands the white privileged took for their own. Age Range: 4 - 8 years; Grade Level: Preschool - 3

NONFICTION

PLANTING STORIES: The Life of Librarian and Storyteller Pura Belpre
by Anika Aldamuy Denise. Illustrations by Paola Escobar.
An inclusive community is a sustainable community. This beautiful book – both with engaging words and colorful illustrations – tells the story of Pura Belpre, born in Puerto Rico, who worked at the New York Public Library in the early-through-mid 20th century. She created a welcoming environment for generations of children and their families through her story times and puppet shows based on folktales from her childhood in Puerto Rico. Age Range: 4 - 8 years; Grade Level: Preschool - 3. Available in Spanish and English.

A GREEN PLACE TO BE
by Ashley Benham Yazdani
Central Park is the jewel of New York City but it took a lot of people and a lot of sacrifice to make it happen! There is also a great section on all the different styles of bridges in the park – over 20 of them! Age Range: 7 - 10 years; Grade Level: 2 - 5

WHAT A WASTE
by Joës-Franch
A fun and dynamic introduction to issues around waste, pollution, and recycling. Colorful two-page spreads explain details about both individual and global issues of resources and sustainability, with a focus on practical effects and actions. Age Range: 6 - 9 years; Grade Level: 1 - 4

YOU ARE NEVER ALONE
by Elin Kelsey. Illustrations by Soyean Kim
Beautifully written with a positive theme, this read gives children a warm feeling during a tough time of climate change, depression, with the underlying concept that we are all part of nature and it is interconnected with everything we do. Age Range: 4 - 6 years; Grade Level: Preschool - 3

THE ADVENTURES OF ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLT
By Andrea Wulf. Illustrated by Lillian Melche
In graphic novel form, with engaging and informative illustrations, this book tells the fascinating story of Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859), explorer and polymath scientist. With humor and drama, the reader follows von Humboldt and his companions on their five year expedition (1799-1804) through Latin America. Von Humboldt had a passionate but clear and scientific understanding of the complex interrelationships of life and the impact that humans have on the environment. Age Range: 11 and up; Grade Level: 6 – 12

Find out more about SustainRT: http://www.ala.org/rt/sustainrt