



Books as Gifts

It's the time of year when we think of sharing with others. What's better to share than a bit of time? And what better way to share your time than by reading a book together! This list includes books for all ages and interests, so we invite you to browse ...

Happy Holidays from Reading Rockets!

Books for children 0-3 years old

Baby Loves the Five Senses: Hearing!

by Ruth Spiro

The science behind sound and vision is presented in accessible illustration and straightforward text. The language used includes sophisticated terms (e.g., cochlea, vibration, etc.) which will likely familiarize younger children (and their adults) with the vocabulary of the science.

Cerca / Close and Lejos / Far

by Juan Felipe Herrera

Simple concepts are presented in straightforward language in both Spanish and English. On each sturdy double page is a crisp illustration that uses simple line and flat form. The result is a precise, highly accessible look at the basic concepts of near and far.

Colors

by Shelley Rotner and Anne Woodhull

Explore colors in crisp photographs and brief language. Blocks of different hues show color variations and accompany a picture and a brief descriptor (e.g., a photo of a frog combines with "Green hops."). Turn the page and other images complement the lyrical text for a very satisfying introduction to colors in the real world.

Dias y dias / Days and Days

by Ginger Foglesong Guy

A snowy landscape: "Brrr ... Invierno. Winter." But winter turns to spring, then summer, followed by autumn, and finally a new year. Single words in both English and Spanish combine with gentle illustrations to present children and families throughout the seasons.

From 1 to 10

by Mies Van Hout

Playful illustrations in brilliant colors depict charming, expressive, almost childlike but recognizable animals. Numerals accompanied by one word on each sturdy, double-page spread encourage counting from 1 belly (on a teddy bear) to an alligator's 10 teeth. An endnote offers concrete ideas for adults to encourage counting beyond the pages of this engaging book.

Hide-and-Sleep: A Flip Flap Book

by Lizi Boyd

Split pages encourage young readers to look carefully at the cheerful illustrations with bold lines and simple forms. As night approaches, a whole page turns to reveal no one is hiding and soon, almost everyone sleeps!

Jump!

by Tatsuhide Matsuoka

Frog, kitten, dog, a grasshopper, and other critters (well, maybe not the snail) jump with each upward turn of durable pages. "BOING" configures differently for everyone airborne until a girl exclaims "I jump" accompanied by an extended "B-oi-oi-oi-oi-ing!" This playful book is sure to delight young readers.

One Shoe Two Shoes

by Caryl Hart

A dog holds its human's one shoe in preparation for a walk. Many types of shoes are seen from the dog's perspective — including shoes that provide a house for a mouse. Mice multiply, and once dog and person go for another walk, the mice play on roller skates. Mixed media illustrations and staccato language make this a ripe for a lively read aloud.

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Books for children 0-3 years old (continued)

The Thank You Book

by Mary Lyn Ray

From a lap to sit on to “this earth we ride on...” people and animals are grateful for the everyday things they see and experience. Idealized illustrations complement the text to focus on simple, commonplace pleasures.

Welcome Home: Where Nature's Most Creative Creatures

by Lisa Mundorf

The places where animals live are specifically named and presented in illustration. Turn the page and the animal is placed in a very human setting (e.g., otters' resting place is a “couch”) to allow children to glimpse the dual meaning of familiar words.

Whose Footprint Is That?

by Darrin Lunde

A pictorial clue accompanies the question, “Whose footprint is that?” The footprint appears on the opposing page. A turn of the page reveals the answer with a picture of the mystery animal. What animal can change footprints? Only one! When humans change footwear so does their footprint and different footwear may lead to further exploration.

Books for children 3-6 years old

Around the Table That Grandad Built

by Melanie H. Hill

Several generations of a family prepare for a meal together. Told in the cadence of a familiar rhyme, each member — from the youngest to the oldest — contributes to the celebratory occasion. Bright, childlike illustrations capture the fun and food for a festive meal shared “around the table that Grandad built.”

Astro Girl

by Ken Wilson-Max

Astrid tells her father that she wants to be an astronaut, and is not deterred when her father asks her if she can eat food from a package and go round and round the earth in a spaceship. When her mother gets home, Astrid, embraced by both parents, proclaims, “I want to be an astronaut just like you [her mother].” Uncluttered illustrations simply but effectively depict Astrid's loving family.

The Bear and the Star

by Lola M. Schaefer

“Early one December morning, Bear woke ...” and saw a “new star, barely visible...” Bear began his search for an evergreen tree that would stand tall and strong. Then people gathered from around the world as the “tree [grew] stronger and taller... because it was time for peace.” Rich, snow-filled illustrations complement the lyrical, semi-abstract narration. Though not obviously a holiday story, it may be perceived as one.

Catch Me: A Seek-and-Find Book

by Anders Arhoj

It takes a keen eye to help Little Woof find the color-changing cat! After a clearly shown dog and cat set up the search, with a turn of the page they are hidden in a predominately green outdoor scene followed by more brightly hued places. Once the end is reached, readers will start all over again as Little Woof will change colors for the cat to chase.

A Different Story

by Adolfo Serra

Textured, verdant illustrations use different perspectives to contrast big and small, differences, and commonalities. A rhinoceros and rhinoceros beetle are pictured alone and together punctuating the straightforward text in this quiet visual feast which may generate both questions and discussion.

Dog Breath: The Horrible Trouble with Hally Tosis

by Dav Pilkey

Hally, the Tosis family dog, suffers from a very big problem: she has terrible breath. This, of course, is a major issue for the family and the Tosis' entire community until Hally saves the day! She thwarts serial burglars with her daunting exhalation. The silly and (sort of) gross humor first published in 1994 is available again.

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Books for children 3-6 years old (continued)

Explorers

by Matthew Cordell

The story begins before a family with two parents, one child in a stroller and a lively older boy reach the steps of the museum. The boy acquires a flying toy that leads first to misunderstanding but ultimately friendship. Few words are needed as the detailed, expressive line and wash illustrations convey action and emotion to bring the tale full circle to its satisfying conclusion.

Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story

by Kevin Noble Maillard

What is fry bread? It's food, shape, sound, art, history, and more — so much more. It is an American Indian tradition shared by a member of the Mekusukey Seminoles. A varied group of children and elders are depicted contributing to the recipe as the text describes its complex role in American history. Additional information is appended to create a book that can be used in both simple and complex ways.

Hats Are Not for Cats

by Jacqueline K. Rayner

Are hats for cats? Not according to a large dog that goes on to declare that no hats, big or small are simply "...not for cats at all." The lively descriptions of all kinds of hats (pirate or party, silly or frilly) are accompanied by equally jaunty illustrations that convey not only action but cat and dog emotions finally affirming that "Hats are for everyone!"

I Love My Colorful Nails

by Alicia Acosta and Luis Amavisca

Ben got the best birthday present of all when he walked into his classroom that day. Until then, after being teased at school, Ben hid his love for colorful fingernails, only painting them on weekends. His friend Margarita and Ben's parents had always been supportive, but now everyone would share Ben's joy. Line and wash illustrations complement this unique way of accepting differences.

I Need a Hug

by Aaron Blabey

Poor porcupine! No one will give the prickly (but needy) critter a hug. Not Lou the rabbit, not Ken the deer, not even big bear, Joe. They are all afraid of the green kiss-seeking snake. But porcupine isn't! Animated, comical illustrations combine with conversation bubbles to tell a very funny, understated, and satisfying story.

In Every House on Every Street

by Jess Hitchman

Join the narrator's rhyming examination of his house, including things one doesn't always see. For instance, in the room where the family bakes, "we sing into spoons and get covered in cake!" Each room holds special pleasure. A double gatefold opens up an entire block of houses, concluding "...our house is something like yours!"

Just Because

by Mac Barnett,

A father warmly and creatively answers his child's endless questions: "Why is the ocean blue?" ("Because every night fish play sad songs and cry blue tears.") The final question, "Why do we have to sleep?" is answered, "Because there are some things we can only see with our eyes closed." Stylized illustrations suggest a timeless quality to a child's curiosity and a parent's patience.

Just in Case You Want to Fly

by Julie Fogliano

A child looks out from an apartment window assured that the wind and sky will be there if she wants to fly. The lyrical reassurances continue as children continue on different adventures, imaginatively portrayed in the artist's signature bold, childlike style. Altogether, this is a comforting, cozy book to share again and again.

Little Bro, Big Sis

by Rocio Bonilla

When the younger brother describes his sister, she's pictured as a rhinoceros, a boring, bossy bully. Flip the book over, and it's the sister who sees her brother as a noisy, annoying monkey. They come together to realize that maybe two kids in "the family isn't so bad." But then with a "Waaaa," a third sibling arrives! This humorous look at sibling dynamics is sure to resonate.

Mr. Scruff

by Simon James

Poodle Polly belongs to Molly. Eric, a dachshund, belongs to Derek. But for the poor, large, older mutt named Mr. Scruff, there's no one. That is until small Jim meets him — and even though their names don't rhyme, they become fast friends. Whimsical illustrations add charm to this affable, rhyming story.



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Books for children 3-6 years old (continued)

One Fox: A Counting Book Thriller

by Kate Read

One "famished fox" with 2 "sly eyes" and 10 "sharp teeth" gradually creeps up to an unsuspecting hen house. Suddenly, with feathers flying, "100 angry hens" scare off one "frightened fox." Brief text and dramatic illustrations combine to present a tense, humorous, and very satisfying story combined with counting from 1 to 10.

The Quiet Boat Ride and Other Stories

by Sergio Ruzzier

Though they're quite different, calm and patient Fox remains friends with Chick. Unlike Fox, Chick tends to worry and fret in each of three short tales told through illustration and conversation bubbles. Newly independent readers will appreciate the accessible comic book format and relatable emotions expressed in text and image.

The Scarecrow

by Beth Ferry

A scarecrow guards his fields throughout the seasons; no animal or bird comes. But then something small drops down to forever change the lonely figure in the field. It is a baby crow who stays with the scarecrow, leaves, and then returns with its family. Glowing illustrations change with each season to enhance the touching, rhyming tale.

The Spacesuit: How a Seamstress Helped Put a Man on the Moon

by Alison Donald

Many years ago, Eleanor Foraker, better known as Ellie, "helped change the world with a needle and thread." She and her team worked for a company that made clothing for women and babies. They entered a spacesuit design competition and won. Ellie and team's A7L spacesuit was worn by Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin to walk on the moon. Actual events inspired this unique look at space exploration.

A Walk Through Nature

by Libby Walden

Explore nature from tiny seeds to ocean life, from worlds hidden under ground to a frosted earth. Brief, lyrical text is illustrated on the opposite side of the open book which then folds out to provide additional illustrations and information about the scene. Colorful, stylized illustrations and die cuts add interest to each informative double-page spread.

The Word Pirates

by Susan Cooper

A sterling storyteller and wonderful writer with a word-spinning pen turn Captain Rottingbone and his word pilfering pirates into fantabulous farmers. Lush language and funny illustrations capture the zany story which demands to be shared aloud. This is a fitting homage to this creative team's friend, author and storyteller Margaret Mahy and may lead readers to find additional tales.

Why?

by Laura Vaccaro Seeger

Why is the question a small rabbit asks a gentle but imposing bear. Why can't the bear go into rabbit's hole? Why did rabbit fall from the tree? Bear patiently answers most of the questions, but for some there are no answers. Expressive art and child friendly text fuse seamlessly in this moving and evocative book.



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Books for children 6-9 years old

Anna and Samia: The True Story of Saving a Black Rhino

by Paul Meisel

Anna Mertz helps an orphaned black rhinoceros named Samia prepare for life in a sanctuary. How Anna and Samia became best friends forever is told with verve and humor complemented by engaging, stylized illustrations. An afterword about Anna, Samia, and rhinos as well as additional resources is included.

Ants Don't Wear Pants

by Kevin McCloskey

When you can't stop moving, we say you have "ants in your pants" That's because ants always are moving! Fascinating facts are presented in a generously illustrated, humorous but factual format — including what ants eat and what eats ants. This is a worthy addition to the author's fascinating and accessible series.

The Book Rescuer

by Sue Macy

Aaron Lansky always remembered his grandmother's immigration story when she was forced to give up her candlesticks and her Yiddish book. Aaron also loved books. An informal narration and darkly hued illustrations (which the illustrator notes pay homage to Marc Chagall) introduce a fascinating man whose work continues in the Yiddish Book Center. Additional information concludes this attractive and informative biography.

The Dog Who Lost His Bark

by Eoin Colfer

In spite of his canine mother's assurances, a puppy is mistreated by people and winds up at a shelter. A boy named Patrick and his mother spend the summer — and beyond — at his grandfather's home. How the dog who lost his bark and a boy with no friends and parents who are separating help each other heal is tenderly told and gently illustrated in this short, moving novel.

The Hike

by Alison Farrell

Three high-energy children and their dog begin a hike in the woods by running. They stop along the way to enjoy thimble-berries, observe a deer, and more. One of the girls keeps a journal of things she's observed. Wren's journal is shown after the three children return home as the sun sets. Simple illustrations convey their joy of an outdoor hike and what the kids have seen along the way.

The Important Thing About Margaret Wise Brown

by Mac Barnett

Like the life of Margaret Wise Brown, this is not a typical biography of an author. "Margaret Wise Brown lived for 42 years. This book is 42 pages long." And while nobody's entire life can fit in 42 pages, the important things can. In a conversational narration, key elements of Brown's life and contributions are highlighted, illustrated in gently line and soft colors. Altogether, this is a fitting tribute to a singular author.

In Search of Dinosaurs: Find the Fossils: Identify the Dinosaurs

by Daniele Fabbri

Dinosaurs lived during three eras: Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous. Find out what's in a paleontologist's toolkit then join a dig site for each period. Double-page gatefolds open to reveal which dinosaurs once lived at the dig site. Additional information and a quiz complete this realistically illustrated introduction for budding scientists.

King of the Tightrope: When the Great Blondin Ruled Niagara

by Donna J. Bowman

Jean-Francois Gravele first performed as a child. Walking on ropes required skill, confidence, and daring, which Jean-Francois had in abundance. As an adult, he traveled from France to America and decided he would walk across Niagara Falls — on a rope! This fascinating character comes to life in lively language and dramatic illustrations. Additional information about The Great Blondin, as Jean-Francois became known, and photographs are included.

Look Again: Secrets of Animal Camouflage

by Steve Jenkins and Robin Page

From rocks to coral reefs, animals and insects can be difficult to see. Why? Because camouflage provides protection. Camouflaged animals are described in specific environments; turn the page and the same animal is shown without camouflage with recognizable size comparisons. Additional information concludes the handsomely illustrated and informative volume.

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Books for children 6-9 years old (continued)

Mario and the Hole in the Sky: How a Chemist Saved Our Planet

by Elizabeth Rusch

For his 8th birthday, young Mario Molina got a microscope, which launched a career in science. His interest in chemistry led to a doctorate and work on the atmosphere. In an epilogue by Mario, the Mexican-born chemist declares he has now taken on global warming. Additional back matter adds even greater interest in this accessible and appealing biography. The book is also available in Spanish: *Mario y el agujero en el cielo: Cómo un químico salvó nuestro planeta*.

Monsters: A Magic Lens Hunt for Creatures of Myth, Legend, Fairy Tale, and Fiction

by Celine Potard

Monsters are found around the world, in books and in folktales. They are scary or silly, well-known, or unfamiliar. With a red cellophane lens, find hidden critters on the large pages. Meet monsters that come from caves and mountains, to those that come in the night. There are even monster parts and pieces presented that can be used to inspire new creations.

Mr. Penguin and the Fortress of Secrets

by Alex T. Smith

Mr. Penguin and Colin, his Kung Fu kicking spider sidekick share another slapstick adventure. Will they and their new friends be able to thwart the nefarious Rodent Gang? Can they solve the mystery of the peculiar noises coming from the fortress? Lots of illustrations help move their adventure quickly to its satisfying conclusion in this followup adventure to *Mr. Penguin and the Lost Treasure*.

The Nature Craft Book

by Clare Beaton

A bit of information about familiar birds, butterflies, and other things found in the natural world is presented followed by different activities. From finger puppets to mobiles, from cookies to prints each craft includes easy-to-follow instructions and helpful illustrations. An equally effective format is used in *The Ocean Craft Book*.

Noodleheads: Fortress of Doom

by Tedd Arnold

Mac and Mac, empty-headed noodle brothers, want to fill their heads with knowledge. But how? Start at the library, of course! Traditional “noodlehead” tales are reimagined here quite literally and presented in comic book format. Filled with jokes and slapstick, humor abounds throughout each of three chapters. A note for adults about traditional story sources ends this latest addition to the Noodleheads.

Peter & Ernesto: The Lost Sloths

by Graham Annabelle

Peter and Ernesto and other sloths lose their tree homes — destroyed by a hurricane. Their search for a new home is fraught with danger — alligators, jaguars, and more (oh my!). Finally they find a new home with a surprising roommate. Limited text and cartoons tell a raucous, silly adventure, the second story in this series. (See also: *Peter & Ernesto: A Tale of Two Sloths*)

The Quicksand Book

by Tomie dePaola

Although not likely, if one ever finds themselves stuck in quicksand, this is the book you need! Two children, one stuck in the muck, receives information about quicksand and how to respond if caught. Tomie dePaola’s signature illustrations are as witty and appealing as when the book first appeared in 1977.

Rapunzel

retold by Barbara Rogasky

In this traditional, sophisticated retelling of the Grimm tale, Rapunzel was taken from her parents because her father gathered food from a witch’s garden. Rapunzel grew up in a tower only accessible by way of her long golden hair. Hyman’s luminous, highly detailed illustrations were honored when first published in 1982 and are again available.

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Books for children 6-9 years old (continued)

Small in the City

by Sydney Smith

A child travels alone on a bus through a bustling city. Who is the narrator addressing? Is the reader or someone else? The child offers advice, like "Alleys can be good shortcuts..." but there are dangers, too. Arriving home to a red door and a warm embrace, the child confidently says "You will be all right." Only close examination of the stunning illustrations provides clues as to who (or what) is really small and alone in the city.

A Stone Sat Still

by Brendan Wenzel

How can one thing be smooth and rough, a feel and a smell, and red, green, and purple, too? Does the stone that "sat still... as it was where it was in the world" change or is it how different animals see it? Poetic language and softly lined and colored illustration combine to present a book about change and constancy, sure to generate discussion.

Thukpa for All

by Praba Ram and Sheela Preuit

When the gong rings at the gumpa, Tsering takes off for home knowing that hot, hearty, spicy thukpa awaits him. He invites others as he meets along the mountainous path. When the power goes out, Abi worries she won't be able to see to complete the thukpa. But Tsering is accustomed to the dark as he's blind. Alliterative, onomatopoeic language complements the childlike illustrations. Information about thukpa and a recipe are included.

We Are Grateful: Otsaliheliga

by Traci Sorell

Join the Cherokee people as they celebrate each season of the year and special occasions, as well as the daily activities for which gratitude is expressed. Bold hues and flat forms distinguish the naïve illustrations. Cherokee words, based on Sequoyah's syllabary (written symbols for syllables), are sprinkled throughout. Additional information concludes this handsome and unique glimpse of contemporary Native life written by a Cherokee author.



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Books for children 9-12 years old

Astronuts Mission One: The Planet

by Jon Scieszka

Who said that there isn't fact in fun? They haven't met the heroes in this hysterically illustrated space adventure. AlphaWolf, SmartHawk, LaserShark, and StinkBug explore the universe in their Thomas Jefferson Nose Rocket looking for a Goldilocks planet but find danger instead. Earth, the narrator, also provides information about climate change in this wild and witty adventure.

Born to Draw Comics: The Story of Charles Schulz and the Creation of Peanuts

by Ginger Wadsworth

Charles Schulz's childhood seemed to portend his future work. Sparky (his nickname) enjoyed the newspaper comics, drew whenever he got the chance, was athletic, and had a dog with personality. Laid out as a comic strip, this brief, engaging, and revealing biography continues through Schulz's military service during World War II and the creation of his classic strip, "Peanuts." Additional information finishes the fascinating glimpse of a remarkable artist.

Crossing on Time: Steam Engines, Fast Ships, and a Journey to the New World

by David Macaulay

The story of steamships and transatlantic travel is intertwined with Macaulay's personal story of leaving the United Kingdom for America in 1957. Sophisticated readers will appreciate the detailed narrative describing the evolution of ocean voyages though the richly detailed illustrations are likely to have broader appeal. Photographs (including a young David) and an afterword are included.

The Dictionary of Difficult Words

by Jane Solomon

An affable start concludes with zest and zeal in this oversized volume which welcomes wordsmiths. Dip in or go through the alphabetic presentation of words that are likely unfamiliar to young readers. The part of speech (explained in the beginning) and pronunciation is included before the understandable definition. Illustrations enliven and enhance the entire presentation in this playful look at language.

Even More Lesser Spotted Animals

by Martin Brown

Never heard of the black and rufous sengi? How about Brainville's beaked whale? Lions, and tigers and giraffes are all familiar, but in this humorously illustrated and informative volume you'll find out about even more less-well-known animals. As in the first book in the series, *Lesser Spotted Animals*, readers meet unfamiliar animals, where they are found, what they eat, and if they are thriving. After all, "how can we help something survive if we don't even know it exists?"

Humanimal: Incredible Ways Animals Are Just Like Us

by Christopher Lloyd

From farming to feelings, from teamwork to community, "... it turns out that the respect for animals that is so important in indigenous traditions makes very good sense." In other words, humans and animals share a great deal, making all creatures "humanimals" — a case presented in clear illustration and straightforward text. The scientists who study animals and their behavior are included, as are additional resources.

The Incredible Cabinet of Wonders

by Joe Fullman

Tailors, scientists, toy makers, miniaturists, doctors, and more have collections that relate to their interests. Twelve collections are presented on double-page spreads illustrated by different artists. Lift the flaps to discover what is contained therein. The Musician's Cabinet contains Edison's phonograph and a sea dragon wind instrument, for example. On the final spread, the museums in which these wonders are housed is provided.

Lalani of the Distant Sea

edited by Erin Entrada Kelly

Lalani and her mother live on Sanlagita, an island under constant threat from the mountain Isa. Lalani's quest begins when her mother falls gravely ill. Steeped in Filipino lore, this is a riveting fantasy, enhanced by evocative illustrations in a handsome format. Lalani confronts and overcomes all odds for a satisfying conclusion.

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Books for children 9-12 years old (continued)

The Line Tender

by Kate Allen

Twelve-year old Lucy lives with her father in Rockport, Massachusetts. Her mother, a marine biologist, died several years earlier. Lucy and her best friend and neighbor with a passion for science are making a field guide about marine animals: Fred writes; Lucy draws. Loss, grief, and healing are deftly handled in this memorable, striking novel in which community, art, science, and love intersect.

Mac B.: Kid Spy: Kid Undercover

by Mac Barnett

Could the Mac B growing up in the 1980s really have been a spy before he became an author? Who gets called to England to help the Queen? Not likely, but it sure makes a good adventure. Amusing line drawings use limited color to add to the humor in the start of a new series. Fun and adventure with Mac B continue in *Mac B. Kid Spy: The Impossible Crime*.

The Magnificent Migration: On Safari with Africa's Last Great Herds

by Sy Montgomery

There is great drama to be found on the Serengeti, witnessed by scientists. Meet some of those who study the migration of wildebeest in Tanzania. Observe the animals that share the land with the wildebeest. The author's insightful, illuminating, and highly readable narration in a handsome format with stunning photographs is also a plea for humankind to respect other mammals.

Nose Knows: Wild Ways Animals Smell the World

by Emmanuelle Figueras

How do we know something that is invisible is really all around? With our noses! Human "noses can detect more than 400,000 different smells." Animals use their noses for different reasons; dogs smell marked territory, great white sharks detect prey. Sometimes humorous illustrations and flaps that lift reveal a bundle of information sure to inspire further inquiry.

Pages and Co.: The Bookwanderers

by Anna James

Her mother disappeared when Matilda "Tilly" Pages was just a baby. Since then she has lived with her grandparents in their London bookstore, Pages & Co. At the start of the midterm break, Tilly discovers a special talent: she is a bookwanderer which allows her to meet characters from her favorite books like Anne (of Green Gables) and Alice (in Wonderland). In this riveting, well-told tale, other characters from classics come alive. The conclusion is satisfying while pointing to forthcoming stories.

Pie in the Sky

by Remi Lai

Jingwen feels more like he's on Mars than in Australia when he, his younger brother Yanghao, and their mother relocate from China. English is a breeze for Yanghao but a struggle for Jingwen who hears it as just gibberish. Line and wash illustrations cleverly depict the language confusion as well as the brothers' plausible relationship. Even with serious issues present (the boys' father has died; their mother works long hours) this remarkable book is witty, engaging, and entirely credible.

A Place to Land: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Speech That Inspired a Nation

by Barry Wittenstein

Luminous illustrations and free verse combine to tell the story of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. When King arrived for the March on Washington in 1963, his speech was not yet completed. Nonetheless, he found a "place to land" to complete his historical speech then give it on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Focusing on this singular moment in history is powerful and stunningly presented in word and image.

A Ray of Light

by Walter Wick

Matter can be liquid, solid, or gas that can have a role in its [light's] creation. In large, luminous, light-filled photographs and understandable text, explore various aspects of light from incandescence to the color spectrum, iridescence, and more. Additional information about topics concludes this inspiring and informative overview to light.

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Books for children 9-12 years old (continued)

Rise! From Caged Bird to Poetry of the People, Maya Angelou

by Bethany Hegedus

The life of Marguerite Johnson, better known as Maya Angelou, vividly comes to life in free verse and swirling images. Young Maya found solace in language, the rhythm of words during her difficult childhood in “the seesaw of the South,” and fast-paced St. Louis. She became a performer, a poet, and a highly respected novelist. A forward by her grandson encourages discussion as the book is shared. Photographs accompany a timeline of Maya’s life which concludes this sophisticated book.

Science Comics: Wild Weather: Storms, Meteorology, and Climate

edited by MK Reed

A meteorologist tries to enlighten the handsome but clueless anchorman about weather, weather forecasting, and climate. The comic book format presents complex information about climate change, balancing it with just the right amount of humor. Advice to prepare for emergency preparedness and a glossary are included. Transportation and car enthusiasts will enjoy *Science Comics: Cars Engines that Move You* by Dan Zettwoch.

Sonny’s Bridge: Jazz Legend Sonny Rollins Finds His Groove

by Barry Wittenstein

He was born in the jazz age so it’s not surprising that Walter Theodore “Sonny” Rollins loved jazz. He loved the saxophone and was a talented musician who became widely recognized. Free verse effectively explores Sonny’s life — including the hiatus he took from public performances, instead playing for himself on the Williamsburg Bridge. Jazzy illustrations enliven the handsome presentation.

Stargazing

by Jen Wang

Can very different girls become best friends? Though both are Chinese-American, Moon and Christine are very different. Christine is cautious, serious, attends Chinese school, and follows rules. In spite of this, Christine and Moon become best friends. Christine wonders if she was a good enough friend when it is discovered that Moon’s celestial visions are caused by an all-too-real problem. Simple cartoon illustrations in full color are expressive and move this notable story to its gratifying conclusion. A note from the author/illustrator reveals the story’s genesis.

Sweeping up the Heart

by Kevin Henkes

Amelia wonders about what would have happened on spring break if her emotionally distant father had taken her to Florida or if she’d been able to go to France with Natalie. She never would have met Casey, or begun to know her father. With the love and support of an older neighbor, Mrs. O’Brien, Amelia decides her break was just right. Insights into growing up, emotions, and relationships are effectively presented in this quiet, short, and moving novel.



Reading Rockets

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