

School Library BOOK NEWS Fall 2008

We will keep you up-to-date throughout the year with details about the finest new children's books, helping you discover each season's "gems".

You'll find reviews and selection lists highlighting a variety of formats and reading levels, from picture books & graphic novels to non-fiction and young adult fiction.

We welcome questions about these and any other titles you'd like for your library. Email or call us: we are your local School Library Specialists!

New Picture Books

With so many great new books this fall, it's difficult to leave any of them out of our newsletter. But with only 6 pages, I must. In this issue you'll find a variety of new titles that are all purchase-worthy, and you can be sure that there are many more that I would recommend. Don't hesitate to drop me a note with requests for suggestions! In the reviews below, titles that bear the red checkmark icon (✓) are the books from this season that we feel you should seriously consider as a first purchase for your collection. Happy reading & shopping! - *Stephanie*

Jack's House ✓

Construction loving boys and girls will adore this humorous twist on the classic nursery rhyme. Someone has done a lot of work building a house. Someone has been operating a cement mixer, driving a bulldozer, and using a forklift to build walls, frame windows, and nail down a roof. Someone has built a big, strong home for Jack. But is this the house that Jack built? One tired puppy dog disagrees in this story about getting what you work for. (Ages 4-8, 32 pp, HC)

The Worst Best Friend ✓

If you chose "Recess Queen" for your collection, you'll also want to add this new title by the same author & illustrator. Two boys, Mike and Conrad, are best, best friends, until the day that Victor, a big & cool new student, arrives at school. Suddenly, Conrad turns into the WORST best friend and forgets all about his pal, Mike. But when Victor's need to win leaves Conrad crushed, it's Mike who steps up to the plate and shows how to be a real friend, a best, BEST friend. Exuberant illustrations and rhythmic text bounce off the pages in this frank and funny look at the challenges and rewards of friendship. (Ages 3-8, 32pp, HC)

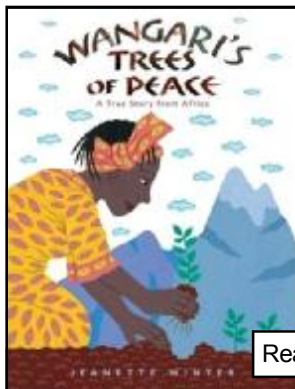
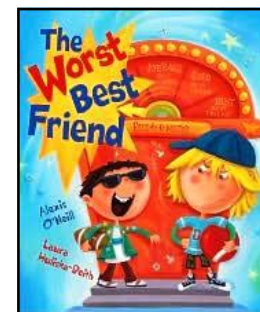
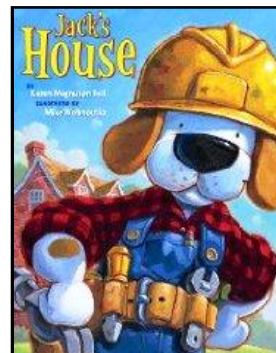
Frankenstein Takes the Cake ✓

No one ever said it was easy being a monster. Take Frankenstein, for instance: He just wants to marry his undead bride in peace, but his best man, Dracula, is freaking out about the garlic bread. Then there's the Headless Horseman, who wishes everyone would stop drooling over his delicious pumpkin head. Twenty-one hilarious poems tell the story of the challenges of planning a monster wedding. A wickedly funny follow-up to the bestselling *Frankenstein Makes a Sandwich* by Adam Rex. (Ages 9+, 40pp, HC)

Halloween Night ✓

Marjorie Dennis Murray's fun and creepy re-working of Clement Moore's traditional Christmas poem is simply fantastic. The cadence and rhymes are spot-on, making it a pleasure to read aloud. "'Twas Halloween night, and all through the house,

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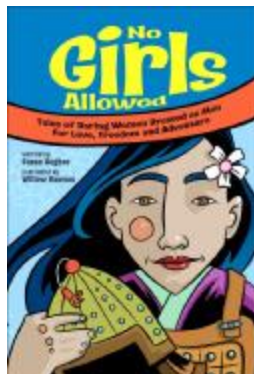
Reading Power p. 3

Exciting New Titles Using Graphic Format

No Girls Allowed by Susan Hughes

Based on legends, poems, letters and first-hand accounts, these seven biographical tales tell of women who disguised themselves as men. From ancient Egypt through the Middle Ages to the 19th century, this historically accurate graphic treatment is perfect to transport readers back to bygone eras. The

(Continued on page 2)



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School Library Specialists

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New Titles in Graphic Format (Continued from page 1)

lives of these daring women were often filled with danger and the fear of discovery. However, for the sake of freedom, ambition, love or adventure, these women risked everything. (Ages 9-12, 80 pp, PB)

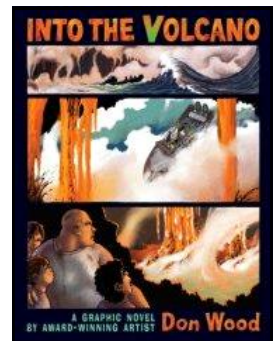
Graphic Spin series: Classic Fairy Tales

Here is a new series of graphic novel versions of classic fairy tales such as *Cinderella*, *Jack & the Beanstalk*, *Rumpelstiltskin*, and *Beauty & the Beast* that have been retold for reluctant readers. With fresh, bold illustrations, these retellings have a modern edge, yet are faithful to the spirit of originals and are therefore "darker" than the "Disney-style" versions of recent years. These would look intriguing displayed alongside other spine-tingling titles at Halloween, and would also be useful in the classroom for language arts units exploring different versions of classic fairy tales. Sure to attract even the most reluctant readers. (Ages 8-12, 33 pp, PB)



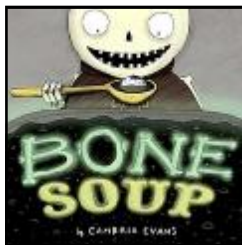
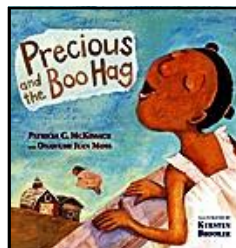
Into the Volcano ✓

This exhilarating graphic novel by Caldecott-winning illustrator Don Wood is visually stunning with its large trim size, glossy pages and full-colour sequences. Two brothers are told they must travel to a volcanic island to help an aunt they have never met. When they arrive, they discover that their mysterious auntie is up to no good. She sends the boys on an expedition that takes them on a wild boat ride straight into an erupting volcano. Packed with action, adventure, mystery and plot-twists, young readers won't be able to put this book down until the end - and then they'll probably pick it back up and start all over again! (Ages 10-13, 174pp, HC) ■



Fun & Spooky Reads

- **Precious & the Boo-Hag** by Patricia McKissack & Unawumi Moss
- **Frankenstein Makes a Sandwich** by Adam Rex
- **Frankenstein Takes the Cake** by Adam Rex (review on p. 1)
- **Vunce Upon a Time** by J. Otto Seibold
- **Bats at the Library** by Brian Lies (review on p. 4)



- **Halloween Night** by Marjorie Dennis Murray (review on p. 1)
- **Babymouse #9: Monster Mash** by Jennifer L. Holm
- **Goodnight Goon: A Petrifying Parody** by Michael Rex
- **Bone Soup** by Cambria Evans
- **The Three Bears' Halloween** by Kathy Duval



NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS



Stephanie Kwok

As owner of Fraserwood Books, Stephanie must wear many hats: buyer, bookseller, reviewer, accountant... But her favourite one of all is that of storyteller. Bringing a story to

life before a group of little faces and sharing in their experience gives her great joy.



Emily Chan

Emily is a grade 10 student at Riverside Secondary. She is a journalist for the youth magazine *Youthink*, and enjoys reading and writing for profit.

Krista Wallace

Krista is a writer and performer.

In her volunteer work as a literacy coach, she has considerable experience working with struggling and reluctant readers in the primary and intermediate grades.

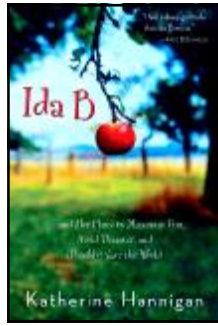


Feature Reviews: Novels for Tweens & Teens

Ida B. and her plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster, and (Possibly) Save the World

Review by Krista Wallace

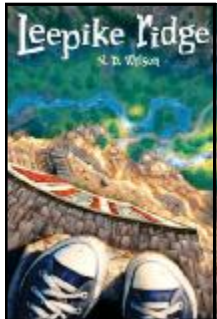
Ida B's world is perfect. Her mom teaches her at home so she doesn't have to go that horrible school where they call her plain *Ida*, make her sit in a desk all day, and only let her have fun "when it's time." (But it never seems to be "time".) She loves spending her days with her parents and chatting with the trees in the orchard. Every day she makes a plan to maximize fun. Life should always be fun. Then the unthinkable happens, and everything must change, including facing grade four at the school. Ida B must make a new plan -- to put things back together, or life may never be perfect again. (Ages 8-12, 246pp, PB)



Leepike ridge

Review by Krista Wallace

Mix *Tom Sawyer* and *Robinson Crusoe* with a little of Homer's *The Odyssey*, and you'll have this terrific adventure! Tom Hammond is not impressed that his mom might marry Jeffrey, a teacher from Tom's school. During a late-night wander, Tom takes a ride on a makeshift raft. Tom travels rapidly downstream where he becomes trapped beneath Leepike Ridge. And he's not alone. A fellow captive, an underground tomb and buried treasure will uncover a mystery Tom never knew about, and solve it as well, confirming Tom's instincts about Jeffrey. Now if only he and his companion can escape! (Ages 8-12, 240 pp, PB/HC)



The Last Apprentice series ✓

For years, Old Gregory has been the Spook for the county, ridding local villages of evil of all sorts. Now his time is coming to an end. But who will take over for him? Twenty-nine apprentices have tried; some floundered, some fled, and some failed to stay alive. Only Thomas Ward is left. He's the last hope, the last apprentice. The solid writing and characterization of this spooky series will have readers huddling under their blankets as they follow Thomas's "education", and eagerly anticipating each new instalment. The fifth book in Joseph Delaney's series was just published in August: "Wrath of the Bloodeye". (Ages 10-14, 384 pp, PB, B&W illust.)



Wild Girls

Review by Emily Chan

When Joan moves to California and meets the eccentric Sarah, or, 'Queen Of The Foxes', she never imagines that her life will change so dramatically. But Joan is drawn into Sarah's world of fantasy and the two girls soon become best friends, sharing their love of writing and together, learning not only about how to write, but also about how to live. In her inspiring coming-of-age story, Pat Murphy sets a fine example of good writing while her characters are learning about it at a writing course during summer break. "Sometimes you're writing about one thing and you realize that you're really writing about something else," says Verla Volante, Joan and Sarah's remarkable writing teacher. The author seems to have done just this in *Wild Girls*, telling a story of friendship and dreams, while, in the background, she tells a story about family, love, and what happens when love goes away. This novel is filled with metaphors about life and



(Continued on page 5)

New Books for READING POWER



Visualize

Connect

Question

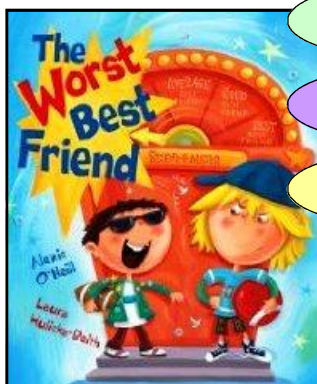
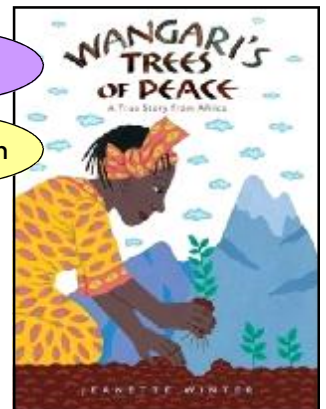


Visualize

Connect

Question

Transform



Connect

Question

Transform



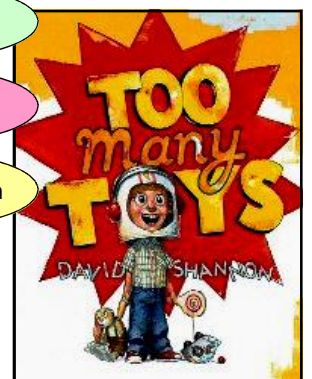
Visualize

Connect

Connect

Infer

Transform

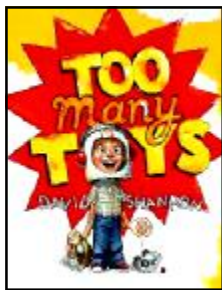
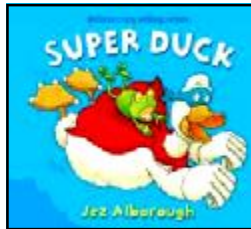


New Picture Books *(Continued from page 1)*

every creature was stirring, including the mouse... The walls were flutter with little brown bats, while hordes of black spiders crept out of the cracks..." The witch is cooking up her signature soup while her monster friends help decorate the house and fill treat bags for a party on Halloween night. The large trim size shows off the fabulous illustrations by Brandon Dorman. His artwork has a luminous quality, just like a moon-lit autumn night. (Ages 5-9, 40 pp, HC)

Super Duck

Hilarious, action-packed new title in the bestselling Duck in the Truck series. Goat is eager to try out his new kite with the help of his friends, Sheep and Frog. But, just as they are about to see if it will fly, Super Duck arrives in his super truck, ready to lend a hand. And, as always when Duck is around, things are bound to go wrong! Indeed, it is not long before Frog is carried up into the sky on the end of the kite's string. Poor Frog! Can Super Duck save the day? (Ages 4-8, 32 pp, HC)

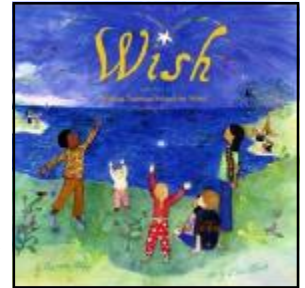


Too Many Toys ✓

Spencer has far too many toys! His father steps on them, his mother falls over them, and the house is overflowing with junk. Now it's time to give some of his mountain of toys away, but Spencer finds it hard to do. In the end, he fills a box, but then decides he can't part with the box! Outrageous illustrations that readers will want to revisit and a theme that will strike a chord with parents and kids alike. (Ages 5-9, 32 pp, HC)

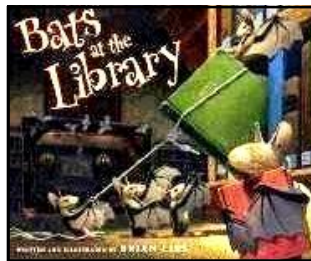
Wish

Wish: Wishing Traditions Around the World offers insight into other cultures with "bite-size" amounts of information about one children's wishing tradition for each of 15 countries, such as Japan, Italy and Russia. This lively compilation features double-page spreads filled with gorgeous jewel-toned watercolour and collage illustrations. In addition, this non-fiction book provides an excellent opportunity for teaching "Reading Powers" such as *Connect*, *Question* and *Transform*. (Ages 5-9, 44pp, HC)



Bats at the Library ✓

Award-winning author/illustrator Brian Lies brings readers another adventure about a charming colony of bats exploring the human world. The book-loving bats visit the public library late one night through a window accidentally left open. The young ones frolic in the water fountain, play around with the photocopier and roam the book-filled halls, but eventually they all settle down for the enchantment of story time. Lies' has paired a rhyming text with his rich acrylic paintings and funny little details for young readers to find that practically guarantee multiple readings. "...the library-after-dark setting works a magic all its own..." -- *Publishers Weekly, Starred Review* (Ages 3-8, 32pp, HC) ■



Books for Newly Independent Readers

The Secret of the Painted House

Review by Krista Wallace

Emily isn't happy about moving to this new house, so far away from everything. But her interest is piqued when she finds a playhouse in the nearby woods. Inside, the walls are painted floor to ceiling with trees, so that it looks identical to the woods outside. There's a playhouse in those woods, too, and even a little girl to play in it. To Emily's surprise, she finds that if she closes her eyes and just steps forward, she can enter the painted woods! It's not long before she realizes, to her dismay, that the other girl may not let her leave. A spine-chilling tale for young readers by Newbery Honour winner Marion Dane Bauer, with B&W illustrations by Leonid Gore. (Ages 6-10, 112 pp, PB)



Felicity Wishes: Summer Sunshine and other stories

Review by Krista Wallace

Felicity is a special kind of fairy: a Friendship Fairy! It is summer vacation, and Felicity and her four dearest friends, Holly, Polly, Daisy and Winnie, are off on a train trip around Fairy World. They'll have adventures, visit new places and, best of all, make all sorts of new friends! Brightly coloured pictures illustrate these delightful stories about friendship and following dreams. Girls who enjoy light-hearted fantasy will be drawn to the sparkly covers, and will be hooked by the charming tales in the entire Felicity Wishes series by British artist Emma Thomson. (Ages 7-10, 117 pp, PB)

Ivy and Bean #5: Bound to Be Bad

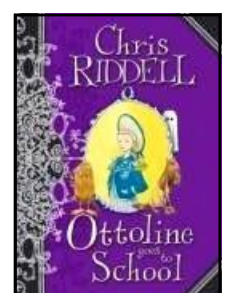
The adventures of the spunky, mischievous second-graders, Ivy and Bean, continue in the latest installment from author Annie Barrows. In *Ivy and Bean: Bound to Be Bad*, the two friends decide to be so good and kind and pure of thought that wild animals will befriend them. When this doesn't work they decide that perhaps a little badness can be good. Features black & white illustrations by Australian artist Sophie Blackall. (Ages 6-9, 124 pp, HC)



The first four books in the series, which received starred reviews from both Publishers Weekly and Booklist, are now available in paperback.

Ottoline Goes to School ✓

In a delightful follow up to *Ottoline and the Yellow Cat*, Chris Riddell delivers another mystery-adventure about the exceptionally inquisitive "Mistress of Disguise", Ottoline. Ottoline decides to attend the Alice B. Smith School for the Differently Gifted. While she is rather worried that she doesn't have a special gift, her loyal companion, the small hairy creature called Mr. Munroe, is more worried about the ghost who is said to haunt the school halls at night. Readers will appreciate the generous use of illustrations and the pitch-perfect combination of absurd humour and sophisticated style. (Ages 7-10, 176 pp, HC)



Novels for Teens *(Continued from page 3)*

growing up. As Joan and Sarah develop their writing skills, they also learn to navigate their own lives, take responsibility for their own happiness, and ultimately influence their parents to do the same. One highlight of this book is the parade of quirky characters that aid the girls in their journeys. From a gruff-looking, science-fiction-writing, father, to whimsical teachers and magical still-walkers, this story is full of colourful 'loose nuts'. (Ages 10-14, 304pp, HC; 272 pp, PB)

Vive La Paris ✓

Review by Krista Wallace

"Mrs. Rosen! You are beginning to exacerbate me." Fifth-grader Paris's expectations are being thrown for a loop. She expects her brother to defend himself when he's being bullied... by a *girl*. And she expects nothing more than piano lessons from Mrs. Rosen. She would never have guessed that one old lady would know so much about bullies, how to look out for one another and how to sing your own song. Paris learns that bravery comes in many forms, and that if you look at the world through rose-coloured glasses, compassion isn't so hard to find. Paris tells her own story with plenty of humour — and politeness. This is the companion novel to Esmé Raji Codell's IRA Children's Book Award winner, *Sahara Special*. (Ages 11-14, 209 pp, HC; 224 pp, PB)

Rhiannon ✓

Review by Emily Chan

In medieval England, tragedy strikes the nation when the king's son goes missing and is presumed dead. On the cliff-tops of Cladaghcombe, far away from the capital of the kingdom, Rhiannon finds herself strangely entangled in the mystery of the missing prince, as she struggles to solve a murder, save a friend's life and help care for the invalids sent to her mother, the local healer. Vicki Grove's twelfth novel intrigues readers with an exciting mystery that clips along at a brisk pace, but the parallel stories of friendship, determination, and Rhiannon's coming-of-age are equally satisfying, and hold particular appeal for girls in their teens. Rhiannon is a strong protagonist who, in dark times, demonstrates bravery and a kind heart, endearing her to readers. One of the remarkable aspects of this novel is the incredible setting. With vivid language and unexpected details, the author evokes a near-magical landscape, transporting readers back in time to the sights, smells and sounds of a remote community during the medieval era. *Rhiannon* is an enchanting novel that is highly recommended. (Ages 11-14, 352 pp, HC)

The Runestone Saga series

Review by Krista Wallace

Book 1: The Fetch *Fetch: defn. 2 – a ghost or apparition that represents a living person.* Sky finds a bag of runestones hidden in his long-dead grandfather Sigurd's sea chest, and it feels like he's found something he's been waiting for. Or could it be that someone else has been waiting for him...? With the help of his cousin Kristin, Sky learns to use the power of the runes to send his fetch on journeys back in time, to other lands, to learn what his grandfather Sigurd wants from him. When he finds out what the runes want of him—of *them*—Sky will have to decide how far he is willing to go to stay connected with the runes' power; even if it means a choice between life and death. (Ages 13+, 357 pp, HC)

Book 2: Vendetta Sky's maternal grandfather, Sigurd, has sent his Fetch to possess Sky's cousin Kristin in an effort to gain complete control over the runestones' power. Book two takes Sky to Corsica, where he hopes to learn the secrets of his father's ancestors — secrets that he can use against Sigurd, to free Kristin, and to stop Sigurd from finding immortality at the expense of others' lives. Sky is prepared to discover new powers of sight, but he is far

from ready for the ancient blood-feud that is reawakened with all new hostility as soon as he arrives on the island. (Ages 13+, 336 pp, HC)

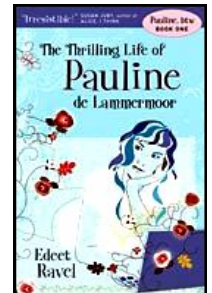
Fans of the Runestone Saga won't want to miss the heart-stopping conclusion, *Possession*, recently published in hardcover.

"Pauline, btw" series

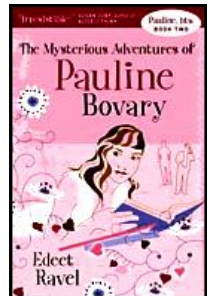
Reviews by Krista Wallace

The Thrilling Life of Pauline de Lammermoor

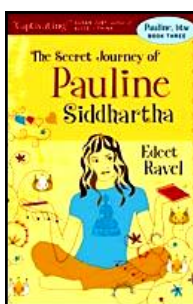
Fourteen year-old Pauline Carelli-Bloom has just got her hands on Zane Burbank III's book, *You Too Can Write a Bestselling Novel!* and now Pauline knows how she's going to spend her summer. Following all Zane's tips on the use of a Thesaurus, lots of dialogue and revealing hidden truths, Pauline writes her life story, and there's a lot to tell. Still living her life while trying to write about it, Pauline can't be sure whether her novel will have a happy ending. The *Pauline, btw* series by award winning author, Edeet Ravel, is a page-turner full of charm and chuckles. (Ages 13+, 224pp, PB)



The Mysterious Adventures of Pauline Bovary Teen author, Pauline, is onto her second novel, writing her life story with the assistance of Zane Burbank III. Now with a firm grip on the use of metaphor and Famous Quotations, Pauline launches herself into Grade 8, all the while having to watch her divorced parents experiment with dating, deal with her best friend moving away, and worrying if she's lost her boyfriend forever. Teenage-hood has enough trenchant conflict to, well, fill a novel. (Ages 13+, 208pp, PB)



The Secret Journey of Pauline Siddhartha The quirky, refreshing *Pauline btw* series continues with book three, and Pauline's visit with her New-Age grandmother in England. If there's one thing Pauline can't stand, it's being called naïve, at the age of fifteen!



Why can't her family and friends understand she has encountered Nigel, her mentor and spiritual teacher? That she is on the path to Nirvana? If this is the road to true tantric happiness, why does she feel so alone? Once again, Pauline relies upon the brilliant advice in her favourite handbook, *You Too Can Write a Bestselling Novel!*, as she searches for answers to life's many questions. (Ages 13+, 224pp, PB) ■



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Since 1999, our primary goal has been to make book selection & purchasing a **thoroughly enjoyable, completely hassle-free experience** for teacher-librarians.

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