2011 Notable Children’s Books

Younger Readers

On their first assignment, two young tooth fairy sisters journey by night into the huge world of humans to collect a young boy’s tooth and fly it safely home.

A young boy and his mother take a familiar ride on a city bus unaware of the historic event they are about to witness: passenger Rosa Parks refuses to move from her seat.

Rubina’s excitement over an invitation to a birthday party is dimmed by her mother’s insistence that she take her younger sister Sana with her.

Bink and Gollie. By Kate DiCamillo and Alison McGhee. Illus. by Tony Fucile. Candlewick.
Dissimilar, yet steadfast friends, celebrate the ups and downs of their daily escapades in three lively chapters that explore compromise, asserting independence, and jealousy. Geisel Award Book

In this wordless picture book, three young children arrive at the park to find a bag of colored chalk that turns their imaginary drawings into something very real.

Unleashed on his visit to the country, a dog meets a new friend in frog and together they experience the seasons and the cycle of life.

The universality of childhood experiences is shown through the lives of two cousins, one in the United States and one in Mexico. Belpre Illustrator Honor Book

The simple rhyme scheme is embellished by colorful illustrations of multicultural babies and toddlers celebrating at a local fiesta. Belpre Illustrator Honor Book

This personal tale is based on the author’s special relationship with his grandmother, who influenced his dream of becoming an artist. Belpre Illustrator Award

The papa hip-pocket frog from Australia, who carries his babies in his hip pocket, is introduced with attractive watercolor illustrations.

This hilarious story presents Little Chicken and her long-suffering papa, who just wants to get through a bedtime story without his daughter’s metafictive disruptions. Caldecott Honor Book
A joyful collection of brief poems paired with dynamic woodblock prints celebrates favorite animals from every continent.

Ling & Ting: Not Exactly the Same! By Grace Lin. Illus. by the author. Little, Brown.
Six vignettes chronicle the daily adventures of identical twins as they get haircuts, make dumplings, perform magic and take a trip to the library. Geisel Honor Book

Tiny green peas take readers on a fun, whimsical tour of the alphabet.

Unlike her friends and relatives, Gia is not looking forward to the birth of her first sibling, "that ding-dang baby".

Familiar and lesser known nursery rhymes, illustrated with superb needlework and appliqué, create a charming dollhouse of a book.

Quiet comes in many varieties, from “Sleeping sister quiet” to “First snowfall quiet” to “Right before you yell ‘SURPRISE’ quiet”.

A bouncy, rhyming story about a little golden-haired niña who helps herself to everything in the house of the three bears.

Zookeeper Amos McGee gets the sniffles and receives a surprise visit from his caring animal friends. Caldecott Medal

Tuck Me In! By Dean Hacohen. Illus. by Sherry Scharschmidt. Candlewick.
Readers interact with this deceptively simple good-night book, tucking sweet animals into bed.

We Are in a Book! By Mo Willems. Illus. by the author. Disney/Hyperion.
Elephant and Piggie discover that someone, the reader, is looking at them in this hilarious, interactive story about the joys of reading and being read. Geisel Honor Book

While digging with Grandma in the garden, a child learns why earthworms are so important in helping plants grow.

Middle Readers

Making Appalachian Spring – Spare, dramatic text and uncluttered watercolors relay the story of the collaborative creation of a classic American ballet. Sibert Honor Book
Exceptional photography and clear text capture the lives of bats and explore the myths and threats to these amazing mammals.

Poetic text and lush illustrations tell the true story of an extraordinary artist living in 19th-century South Carolina. Caldecott Honor Book & ALA Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award

In this summer adventure, Owen is enthralled by his conviction that something amazing has fallen from a train.

Crisp design and clear photography introduce and depict Fibonacci patterns in nature.

Six haiku for each season of the year, celebrating the interaction of boys and nature, combine with loose, expressive cartoons to make a winning combination.

After beekeepers discover the strange abandonment of hundreds of hives, scientists seek to understand this catastrophic phenomenon.

Animal partnerships often defy explanation; Jenkins and Page explore and clarify these relationships in concise text and glorious torn-paper collage.

Saving the World's Strangest Parrot – This book documents the successes and failures of a rescue effort in New Zealand dedicated to saving a species of flightless parrots numbering fewer than 100. Sibert Medal

This story of newlywed artists Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera in 1930 San Francisco is accompanied by paintings resembling Kahlo’s folkloric style. Belpre Illustrator Honor Book

Using photographs so vivid and sharply focused that one can see a bit of dry scale on a glass lizard’s skin, Bishop treats readers to new appreciations of the diversity within the lizard world.

Flory loses her wings after a bat attack and struggles to adapt to life as a day fairy.
In this story of survival, twelve-year-old Lanesha and her adopted grandmother have little choice but to stay in New Orleans and weather Hurricane Katrina. ALA Coretta Scott King Author Honor Book

In this nonfiction introduction to Spanish flamenco, the art form is described in easy, understandable language. Belpré Author Honor Book

Three sisters find adventure when they are sent to Oakland in 1968 to meet their estranged poet-mother, who prints flyers for the Black Panthers. Newbery Honor Book

Using the Green Book, a guide to find welcoming places for African-Americans, Ruth's family travels through the segregated South of the 1950s.

This picture book autobiographical vignette shows a modern Choctaw family enduring and supporting each other with love, courage, and fortitude.

An autobiography in graphic novel format shows how Stamaty’s love of Elvis and rock and roll, at first drove his mother crazy but ultimately made her proud.

Through artwork showing the details, the reader shares Raina’s pain as the angst of middle school is exacerbated by her disfiguring dental mishap.

In this hilarious tale, Tommy and his sixth grade friends must decide if the advice of an origami finger puppet can be trusted.

As dark and bloody as the title suggests, these six retellings tweak the classic fairy tale as Hansel and Gretel embark on an epic journey of self-discovery.

This collaborative effort by more than 40 writers and artists presents 21 Native American trickster tales in graphic novel format.

Sassy eleven-year-old Turtle finds her life turned on end when she is sent to live with her aunt in Depression-era Key West. Newbery Honor Book

Older Readers
90 Miles to Havana. By Enrique Flores-Galbis. Roaring Brook.  
The author’s experience, as one of 14,000 children moved from Cuba to a refugee camp in Miami in 1961, is told through engaging, fast-paced writing and well-developed characters. Belpre Author Honor Book

This handsome, large-format volume combines archival photographs, original acrylic paintings and powerful first-person narrative to present the devastating story of the painful changes in life forced upon the Lakota people.

Countdown. By Deborah Wiles. Scholastic.  
A “documentary novel” set in the 1960’s Cold War era, this title captures a girl’s fears about the world around her.

An eleven-year-old mourns the death of her father in chapters that alternate between the real world and a dreamlike hotel staffed by odd creatures. Batchelder Honor Book

The Dreamer. By Pam Muñoz Ryan. Illus. by Peter Sís. Scholastic.  
In language inspired by the Nobel Prize-winner’s own poetry, Muñoz Ryan tells the stunning tale of young Pablo Neruda’s self-discovery and the development of his ideologies and artistic voice. Belpre Author Award

Fever Crumb. By Philip Reeve. Scholastic.  
A lone girl sets out on a mission to retrieve lost technology in a bleak and irrational London of the future.

A plantation owner’s daughter conspires with Swedish feminist Fredrika Bremer to secure the freedom of an African-born slave. Belpre Author Honor Book

Heart of a Samurai. By Margi Preus. Abrams/Amulet.  
This swashbuckling adventure is based on the true story of Manjiro, the young fisherman believed to be the first Japanese person to visit America, who against all odds, became a samurai. Newbery Medal

This compelling biography of Lafayette looks at the whole of his life and illuminates the role he played in the American Revolution. Sibert Honor Book

Ten-year-old Caitlin who struggles with Asperger’s Syndrome seeks closure following the murder of her brother.

Alternating between World War I and the Great Depression, this tale of the eclectic people and mysteries of Manifest, Kansas is told through a mix of letters, newspaper articles, and a fortune teller’s tales. Newbery Medal

As classmates struggle to convince a friend that life has meaning, they force each other to prove and
provide meaning, with consequences that are deep, dark, and disastrous. *Batchelder Honor Book & YALSA Printz Honor Book*

**Ship Breaker. By Paolo Bacigalupi. Little, Brown.**
Nailer, a teenage scavenger, works to take apart ancient oil tankers in a future world where he must choose between harvesting riches or saving a girl. *YALSA Printz Medal*

The Ku Klux Klan’s rise from a club of restless young men into the largest domestic terrorist organization in American history is documented with archival photographs and other primary source material. *YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults*

A young refugee searches for identity, safe haven and truth in a journey from war-torn Caucasus to the freedom of France. *Batchelder Award*

Three books in one! This amazing book of poetry is also a beautiful picture book and a nonfiction tribute to the adaptability of life on earth.

**We Shall Overcome: A Song that Changed the World. By Stuart Stotts. Illus. by Terrance Cummings. Clarion Books/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.**
This iconic song, handsomely illustrated here, serves as the framework for new understandings of the Civil Rights Movement.

Based on true events, this graphic novel, told through the eyes of a younger boy, tells the story of Robert (Yummy) as he tries to navigate the dangerous world of a Chicago neighborhood. *ALA Coretta Scott King Author Honor Book*

**All Ages**

**Bones: Skeletons and How They Work. By Steve Jenkins. Illus. by the author.**
Collage illustrations support exploration and comparison of various human and animal skeletons, from fingers to skulls.

Twelve elegantly crafted poems celebrating the night are accompanied by prose pieces about nocturnal flora and fauna. *Newbery Honor Book*

**Farm. By Elisha Cooper. Illus. by the author. Scholastic/Orchard.**
Experience life on a very real farm with very real farmers through the muddy month of March until the next winter.

**Meanwhile. By Jason Shiga. Abrams/Amulet.**
Jimmy explores the lab of a mad scientist in this “Choose Your Own Adventure” style graphic novel.


2011 Notable Children's Books Committee

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