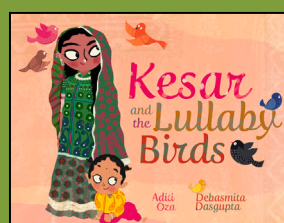
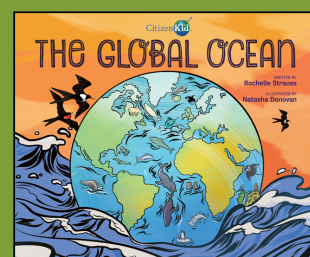
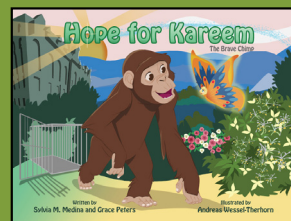
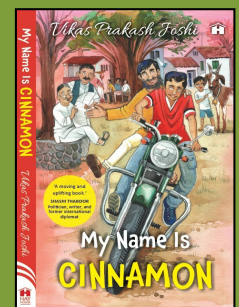
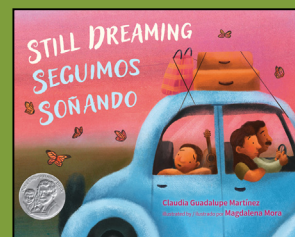
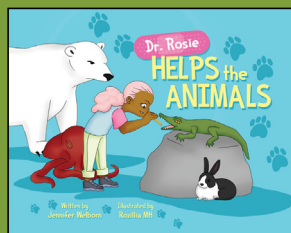
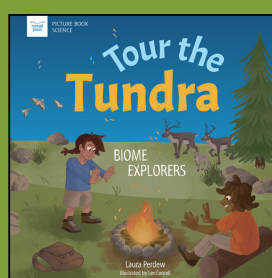
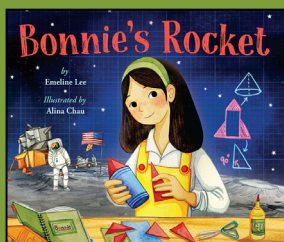
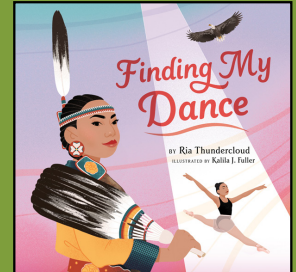
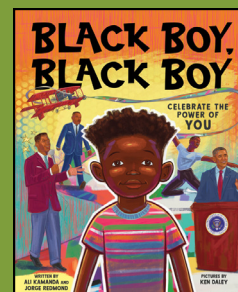
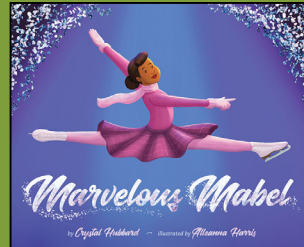
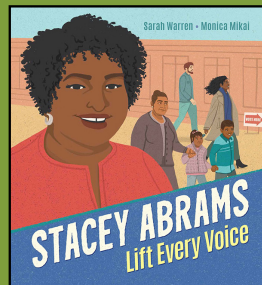
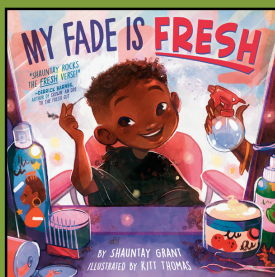
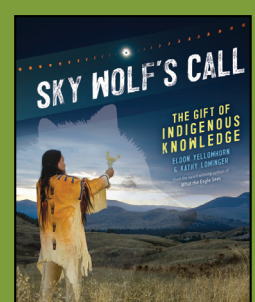
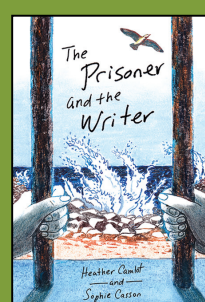
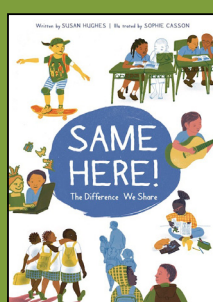
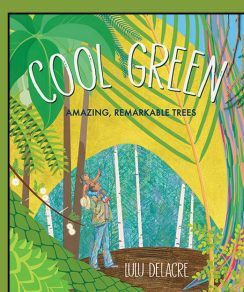
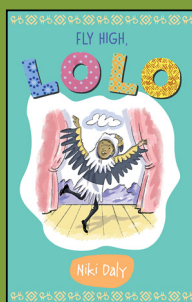
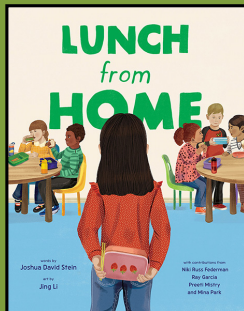
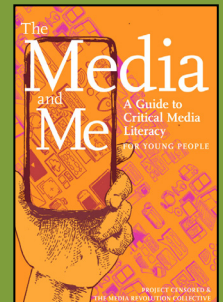
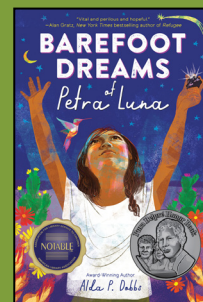
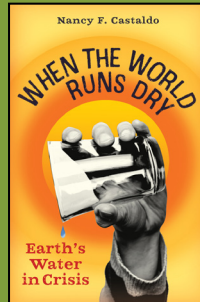
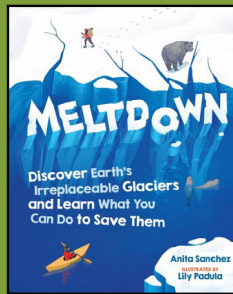
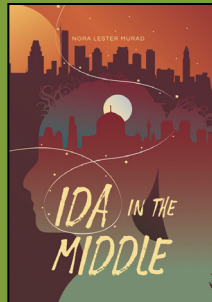
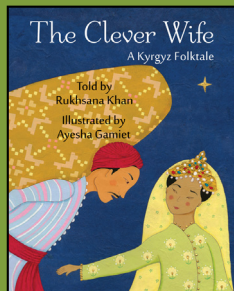


Summer 2023



The 2023 Skipping Stones Honor Awards



We are pleased to recommend the following 28 outstanding books—in Multicultural, Nature, and Teaching Resources categories—as our 2023 award winners. These picture books, chapter books, novels and nonfiction works promote an understanding of cultures, cultivate cooperation, and/or encourage a deeper awareness of nature, ecology, and diversity. They foster respect for multiple viewpoints and closer relationships within human societies. The honored titles offer various perspectives, help us understand our diverse cultures and their histories, and how we overcome challenging situations. Hearty congratulations to the creators of these excellent books!

Multicultural & International Books

Kesar and the Lullaby Birds. By Aditi Oza; illustr. Debasmitta Dasgupta. Picture Book. Yali Books.

This charming book takes you to a little village in the Great Rann (desert) of Kutch, in the state of Gujrat in Western India.

Kesar, a girl of about ten years, has a baby sister named Kamal, who can't sleep at night. Night after night, her father and mother take turns trying to get Kamal to fall asleep. Lullabys and the cradle don't seem to help, either. The parents are patient but exhausted.

One day, Kesar's grandma from a nearby village comes to visit the family. She gives Kesar a gift—a number of beautiful cloth sparrows of various colors strung on two decorated strings that she had made herself. While doing *lippan kaam*—wall paintings with traditional patterns, designs and motifs—to decorate the walls of their home, grandma tells Kesar a story that gives her an idea to create a puppet show for her baby sister's bedtime, using the colorful sparrows on string that she had received from grandma. The puppet show works like magic on Kamal, who sleeps without a fuss, as the sparrows bid her a good night!

As you read this truly authentic book, you get a feel for the gentle yet artistic ways of life that the villagers have in this desert region of India. You also learn some of their everyday words in Kutchi and Gujarati languages. The bright colors, traditional dresses and intricate patterns shown in the expressive illustrations are typical of the region. I appreciated the back home feeling I got each time I read this book because I grew up in an

adjoining state in Western India, and I know many of these words and have seen the folk art from the region.

—Arun Narayan Toké, editor.

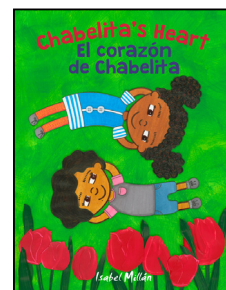
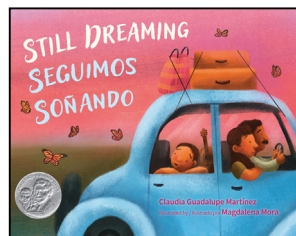
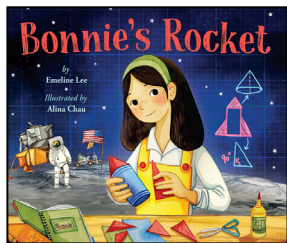
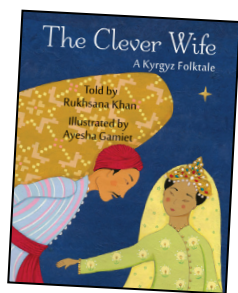
The Clever Wife: A Kyrgyz Folktale. By Rukhsana Khan; illustr. Ayesha Gamiet. Picture Book. Wisdom Tales.

This book shares the story of Danyshman, who comes from a poor background, just like the young new Khan Bolotbek. When Bolotbek is persuaded by his advisors and subjects to get married, Danyshman wins his hand against the other maidens by correctly answering three very tricky riddles he asks. She and the khan rule happily together until she breaks a promise while trying to save a life. Despite accepting punishment for her deed, Danyshman once again proves just how clever she really is, and enjoys her “happily ever after” life.

A simple folktale on the surface, this is a lovely story with deeper themes of forgiveness and using your wit to see the world in a different way. The pictures are gorgeously done in an illuminated manuscript style with hints of bright gold and multiple textures, and the characters have very clear expressions. Children will enjoy the funny outcome Danyshman makes of her punishment, and adults can appreciate the cleverness of her uncommon perspective.

This story is unlike most other folktales I have personally encountered. In a sea of stories that sometimes feels repetitive, this one stands out. I would recommend it to everyone!

—Scooter Milne, our student intern from LCC, Oregon.



Bonnie's Rocket. By Emeline Lee; illustr. Alina Chau. Picture Book. Lee & Low Books.

This is an inspiring, warmly illustrated book that draws on the stories of real people involved with the Apollo 11 lunar landing. Bonnie's father was an engineer for the space mission. This story encourages creativity and perseverance in readers—girls and boys, children of color and others—and shows the deep parent-child bonds that can be maintained, even across long-distance relationships. **Bonnie's Rocket** helps teach readers that trial and error, with an emphasis on error, is part of the scientific process and of life. It even includes instructions for readers to build their own model rocket, just like Bonnie does in the story. The book encourages STEM careers for girls and diverse students in general. It is indeed refreshing to see books with main characters that come from Asian American community.

—Hailey Bonebrake, high school student intern, Oregon.

Still Dreaming/Seguimos Soñando. By Claudia Guadalupe Martínez; illustr. Magdalena Mora. Picture Book. Lee & Low Books.

Still Dreaming/Seguimos Soñando is a compelling story of the hardships a Mexican American family endures to stay together. It is told tenderly through the voice of a child whose father did not have proper papers. The family felt he would be forced to return to Mexico, so they chose to voluntarily leave Texas even though the mother and son had always lived in the U.S. The bilingual text has sensitively crafted illustrations with various tones and shades to convey the emotions going through the child's mind during this arduous journey which make the story stay forever in the readers' minds.

Almost 100 years ago, after the Great Depression of 1929, some two million people were "repatriated" to Mexico. Many of them were farm or factory workers, some had worked to build the railroads, and some were

store owners. Some lived in big cities, others in rural areas. A lot of them lived in Texas and California, which were an integral part of Mexico until the American War on Mexico of 1846–48. The Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty promised American citizenship to Mexicans living in these ceded lands.

But the language barriers, red tape, and bureaucracy gave rise to a different outcome. Economic difficulties in the nation and the resulting loss of jobs made Mexicans and other people of color convenient scapegoats. The book explains this situation in the Author's Note so parents and educators can help young readers with their questions.

During 2009–2019, four million deportations took place in the United States. Today, we still have an uncertain future for over a hundred thousand Dreamers—children who were brought to the U.S. as babies and toddlers, and grew up speaking English and going to school there. This story is very timely and gives a voice to the dreams they have of securing stability and safety.

Highly recommended!

—Arun N. Toké, editor.

Chabelita's Heart/El corazón de Chabelita. By Isabel Millán. Picture Book. Reflection Press.

This book is about Chabelita's heart, but I have to say that my own heart was warmed and excited when reading it. What a delight to read a book that tells the fun story of two young girls who are confident and supported enough for Jimena to proclaim to a fellow student, "So what if Chabelita likes me. I like her, too." Chabelita then responds, "Yes, girls can like girls!" as they hold hands.

After Jimena enrolls in Chabelita's school, the two girls quickly find themselves spending time with each other. When they are given an assignment to draw a person

they admire, Chabelita chooses a woman she describes as a lesbian from Mexico, and Jimena's aunt smiles affirmatively. Jimena chooses an environmental activist from Honduras, where her mother lives after being deported for not having papers. After Chabelita's mom and dad give her a bow tie with conches for school pictures, Jimena's mother in Honduras sends her a bow tie with stars to match with Chabelita's. Chabelita is pictured as wearing more traditional male clothes than what Jimena wears, and it is all fine.

Chabelita and Jimena speak Spanish and English, and the book is written in both languages. **Chabelita's Heart** is a light book about growing up queer in an affirming environment. The text is appealing, and the illustrations are charming.

—Charlotte Behm, educator, Oregon.

Black Boy, Black Boy: *Celebrate the Power of You.* By Ali Kamanda & Jorge Redmond; illustr. Ken Daley. Picture Book. Sourcebooks.

There was a time when you were insulted if anyone called you “Black,” or if anyone other than a close family member called you “boy.” Today, many African Americans are learning to take pride in being Black. It is important for children to understand that there are countless Black heroes. My hope is that one day all Black children can think of their own father as their number-one hero. A long history of racism has all but eliminated the Black father from the family structure.

Black Boy, Black Boy is a large, beautifully illustrated picture book. Books like this need to be displayed up front in libraries and bookstores, and in full view (and to stay in-print). We are shown a father and his young son exploring some African American heroes. These men are just barely introduced, but while the father holds his son's hand, he encourages him with words like, “Shine like the sun, magnificent and bold.” He points out Colin Kaepernick taking a knee while the National Anthem played to protest police brutality and racism against Black people. The father tells his son to, “Realize your power, you're blessed with talents.” He also introduces other role models like Elijah McCoy, a great inventor with many patents. In the back of the book, you can find more information about the nine

heroes presented in the story.

—Paulette Ansari, retired librarian & storyteller, Georgia.

Marvelous Mabel. By Crystal Hubbard; illustr. Alleanna Harris. Picture Book. Lee & Low Books.

This is a lovely picture book about one of the first African American figure skaters, Mabel Fairbanks. She was born in November 1915 in Florida. She had a very difficult childhood. At the tender age of eight she became an orphan. She stayed with one relative or neighbor after another until she ended up with her older brother and his wife in New York. They owned a fish stand in Harlem. Mabel's sister-in-law ran the household. When she caught Mabel giving away fish to the needy one time too many, she forced her to leave their apartment. She was homeless until a young mother saw her sleeping on a park bench and offered her a job caring for her baby.

As she walked the baby in a stroller through the Central Park in New York, she'd often see white people ice skating gracefully. She felt she'd like to do that too. And that's how her life journey as the best African American figure skater began.

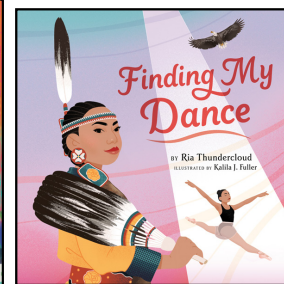
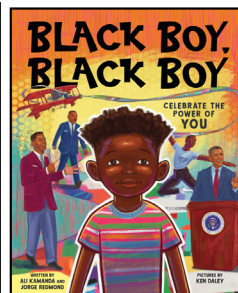
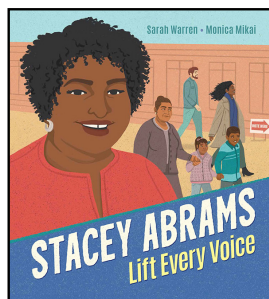
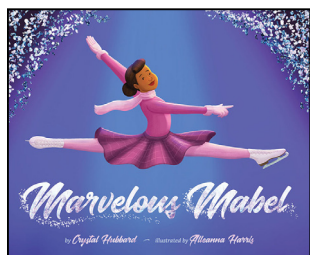
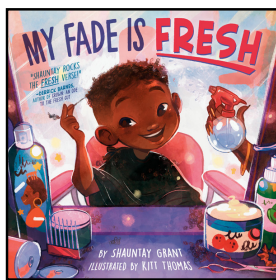
The illustrations show her attractively dressed. Lovely pastels are used, and many of the illustrations are full-spread. One illustration shows her sleeping on a park bench covered with newspapers for a blanket. Even though she excelled in figure skating with persistence and practice, she was not allowed to perform in professional skating shows or to compete in the Olympics.

Mabel's skills and coaching contribution were finally recognized in 1997, when she became the first African American inducted into the U. S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame. She died at the age of 85 in 2001. Mabel left us with a powerful legacy of inclusiveness which continues to this day in the form of a scholarship fund established in her name for skaters from communities of color.

—Paulette Ansari, retired librarian & storyteller, Georgia.

My Fade Is Fresh. By Shauntay Grant; illustr. Kitt Thomas. Picture Book. Penguin Workshop.

From the kitchen table and hair salon to the barber-shop, friends and family lovingly share their opinion in



many cultures. In this picture book, that is exactly what the characters do when a young Black girl decides on a hairstyle for her first visit to the barbershop. Despite the many suggestions of braids, twists or a perm, she is determined to get a fade, and not just any fade, “the freshest fade on the block.”

The illustrations in **My Fade Is Fresh** display all of the various shapes Black hair can take, from curly to straight, short to long. Equally important is the community; the artist details strong facial expressions and the chaos of working as a village to support an important individual decision.

Even though our community influences our present and future selves, each one of us still has the final say in the choices we make. This is the valuable lesson one bold girl learns about exercising confidence to be her true self.

—Melissa Harris, reading specialist and teacher, Illinois.

Stacey Abrams: Lift Every Voice. By Sarah Warren; illustr. Monica Mikai. Picture Book. Lee & Low Books.

This is a well-written and beautifully illustrated picture book, which begins by discussing Stacey’s childhood. She was born on December 9, 1973, in Madison, Wisconsin, the second of six children. Stacey’s dad worked at the shipyard, but with so many to feed, his check never went far enough. He always told his children, “Just because you have nothing is not an excuse to do nothing.” At an early age, Stacey was helping in the soup kitchen filling bowls for the hungry. She was encouraged to do public service. Her parents always checked out the neighborhood school before moving to a new location; they wanted the very best education for their children.

Stacey had a sharp mind and she loved to read. Her parents were active in the Civil Rights Movement and raised their children to be aware of the political climate. Stacey graduated valedictorian from her high school in

Georgia, and so she was invited to the governor’s mansion with her family to celebrate. But the guard refused to admit them because they were Black. When they were finally allowed in, Stacey was too upset to enjoy the festivities.

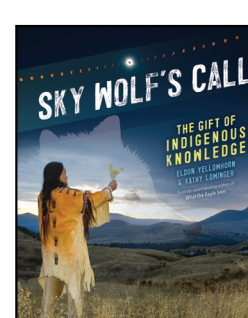
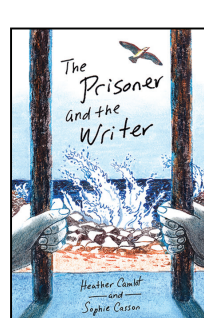
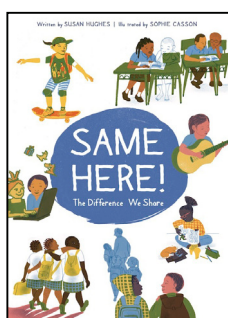
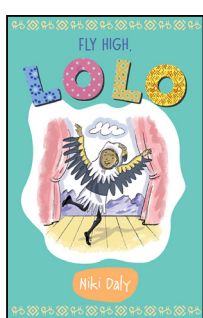
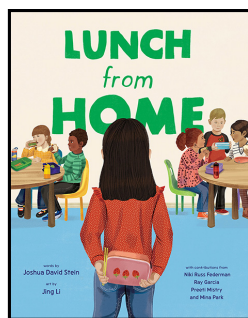
Stacey attended Spelman College in Atlanta and graduated with top honors. She then went on to earn a master’s degree in public affairs from the University of Texas and a law degree from Yale. There is a wonderful two-page timeline at the end of the book that covers voting rights, Stacey’s educational and political career, and progress made in civil rights through 2021. Stacey Abrams has been and continues to be an amazing example of the change she wants to see in Georgia. She encourages everyone to vote and be involved with civil rights. The last couple of pages show young people of different races making flyers and protest signs and working on computers and phones. Stacey, the candidate for governor, is standing right behind them.

—Paulette Ansari, retired librarian & storyteller, Georgia.

Finding My Dance. By Ria Thundercloud; illustr. Kalila J. Fuller. Picture Book. Penguin Workshop.

In this autobiographical picture book, Ria Thundercloud narrates her journey with dance that honors her ancestors and unifies movements with the nature of her homeland. Every step she took led her to exploring a path of dance—from powwow to jazz and classical ballet. She chronicles her many successes as a dancer and also the many challenges she faced as a Native American in a world that did not completely accept her heritage. Along the way, she discovers who she is as a dancer and that she has strong cultural ties to the Ho-Chunk Nation and Sandia Pueblo tribe. The bright illustrations highlight the importance of tradition through rich colors and meaningful symbols.

Dancing is storytelling, and for Ria, it keeps her family roots growing and alive. Learn how she gives tribute to



her ancestors' language, customs and dance, so that they are still present today.

—Melissa Harris, reading specialist & freelance writer, Illinois.

Lunch From Home. By Joshua David Stein; illustr. Jing Li. Picture Book. Rise x Penguin Workshop.

Everyone eats lunch together, every day, in a small classroom. Some kids bring sandwiches, and others bring a variety of different foods traditional to their families and cultures. The kids without sandwiches begin to give into the peer pressure of feeling too different, and start bringing sandwiches for lunch like the others. But one by one, they eventually realize that they can appreciate their differences—including what they eat for lunch. In the end, each kid is happier bringing a piece of their home with them in the form of foods they love... even those who have sandwiches.

This book is based on the experiences of four very real kids who eventually grew up to become chefs, bringing their specific blend of cultures and foods to others in their communities. The bright and colorful pictures capture the love each child and their families share through their different foods. While all of the illustrations are lively and detailed, the scenes of the children at home are especially interesting and inviting, giving us a peek at the foods and places they're familiar with. It almost looks as if you could reach into the pages and feel all of the different textures. As these children become confident about their differences, they learn more about their own cultures. It's wonderful to celebrate and continue our traditions!

On the last page of the book, the author introduces these four kids who grew up to be professional chefs.

—Scooter Milne, our student intern from LCC, Oregon.

Fly High, Lolo. By Niki Daly. Chapter Book. Catalyst Press.

Young Lolo experiences a series of events that culminate in significant life lessons fit for pre-adolescence

and beyond. First, Lolo shares the spotlight with a classmate in a play where they both learn to take flight. Second, she observes how outer beauty can fade, but inner beauty remains when she encounters two real-life beauty queens. Later, Lolo looks past her own happiness to accept her mother finding joy. These stories promote kindness that can be shared throughout an entire community. One good deed affects the students, families, and neighborhood, and somehow Lolo lands right in the middle of this chain of events to both give and receive.

Black and white sketches of the storylines help the emerging reader reflect on main ideas presented in this sweet chapter book for young readers.

—Melissa Harris, reading specialist & freelance writer, Illinois.

The Prisoner and the Writer. By Heather Camlot; illustr. Sophie Casson. Ages 9-12. Groundwood Books.

The Prisoner and the Writer is a tribute to Captain Alfred Dreyfus. He was falsely accused of sending top-secret documents to Germany and found guilty of treason against France. In 1895, he was sent to Devil's Island off the coast of South America, to be imprisoned for life. Four years later, he was exonerated as the result of an open letter penned by Emile Zola, the famous French writer. Zola exposed the French military officers' wrongdoings that framed Captain Dreyfus because he was a Jew. His powerful letter to the president of France entitled "J'Accuse..." was published in a French newspaper and it shared the truth as he saw it. Zola spoke out against the wrongs done to Dreyfus because he wanted to see justice prevail. Unfortunately, he had to flee the country to avoid being imprisoned in France for speaking out against the powerful military.

The Prisoner and the Writer captures the true meaning of how racism can ruin people's lives and that a pen is not just a writing tool. A pen can be used as a key that opens the doors of justice. I found this book very interesting and the metaphorical language helped

me understand more about the characters' feelings and how frightened and alone Dreyfus felt as he was locked up on Devil's Island.

The book switches back and forth and shares the two main characters' perspectives. Eventually, Zola's actions lead to a presidential pardon for Dreyfus. We feel the pain experienced by both Emile Zola and Alfred Dreyfus. I appreciated the detailed illustrations that bring the story to life and evoke empathy. The book encourages us to speak out against acts of racial discrimination or injustices that we might come across. I recommend this book highly for all readers.

—Vajra Vanukuri, grade 7, California; with help from Arun N. Toké, editor.

Same Here! *The Difference We Share.* By Susan Hughes; illustr. Sophie Casson. Elem. & middle grades. Owlkids Books.

What first I noticed about this book is the vast variety of cultures, abilities, families, economics, food, and many other facets of life that are presented in its numerous characters. These vast differences are brought together by aligning them with the needs that all of these children have: to communicate, to feel loved and protected, to have shelter, to learn, to eat, to help their families, to have community, to play, and to dream.

Because the book is organized around these needs, it's fun to see how they are met in so many different ways. For instance, learning takes place in a school on a solar-powered boat in Bangladesh, on a farm in Ethiopia, in a classroom in Finland or in Saudi Arabia with only girls, or in a school breakfast club in England, Spanish class and drama club in the United States, or while taking a break from shining shoes in Ecuador.

The illustrations are engaging and are effective at showing the lives of the people with feeling yet simplicity. The text is just the right amount to describe the diverse lives and how they relate to one another a world away. At the end of the book, several sources are listed that the authors have used to describe these multiple cultures.

—Charlotte Behm, educator, Oregon.

Sky Wolf's Call: *The Gift of Indigenous Knowledge.* By Eldon Yellowhorn & Kathy Lowinger. Grades 6–8. Annick Press.

Sky Wolf's Call is a beautiful book that shows the power and wisdom of indigenous knowledge through multiple facets and formats. The stories, lessons, and applications come from both Canada and the United States.

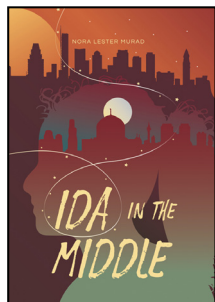
The book explores water, fire, food, and healing in ways that illustrate the initial theme of Everything Is Connected in Nature. For example, water as sacred is introduced along with the current and past significance of water as habitat, sustenance, and transportation. Beavers show the connections between water, humans, and non-human animals. Several humans are highlighted for their contributions, such as Wilma Mankiller, the first woman Chief of the Cherokees, who led efforts to bring running water to Bell, Oklahoma. The book discusses the political issues and battles that are necessary to keep access to clean water.

The book's excellent writing, variety, layout and graphics make the book inviting, hopeful, and accessible. The length of each piece keeps the reader's interest because each one is long enough to be informative, yet short enough to keep the book moving. Readers want to continue to the next vibrant, colorful item, which is visible on the same page.

—Charlotte Behm, educator, Oregon.

Ida in the Middle. A novel by Nora Lester Murad. Middle & Upper grades. Crocodile Books. www.interlinkbooks.com

Eighth grade Ida finds herself outside the lines of the Oldbridge Massachusetts community, especially in school where students all cram into the box of what's viewed as normal. She is soon assigned to share a personal passion for a school presentation. This brings tremendous anxiety, self-doubt, and the pressure of being seen as a terrorist because of her Palestinian roots. Unexpectedly, Ida accesses her ancestors left behind in a village near Jerusalem through a love of food. It is through family she finds the kind of strength and support that cannot be captured in Massachusetts.



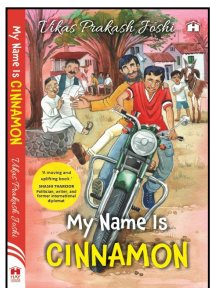
She looks to her past to direct her future, and true friends and loving family aid her along the way. It is this type of encouragement that helps Ida find her passion and define what home really is—not a location, but within herself, where love for her ancestors has been stored.

—Melissa Harris, reading specialist & freelance writer, Illinois.

My Name Is Cinnamon. By Vikas Prakash Joshi; illustr. Niloufer Wadia. Ages 11 and up. Hay House Publishers (India).

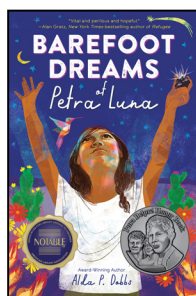
This book tells the story of Roshan Riskikesh Paranjape, better known as Cinnamon, a preteen boy who lives in Pune, India. It is a growing-up story, and we see the world through his eyes; their family trip to Kolkatta, the earnest wishes for a new birthday bike, the family stories about when his parents were young. These episodes are held together by the basic tension in the book: Cinnamon is adopted. At unexpected times, Cinnamon finds subtle and not-so-subtle signs that people around him believe he is inferior because he is adopted: teacher, family friend, peer. The story culminates in Cinnamon's journey with his parents to Nandurbar district, at the edge of Maharashtra state, to meet his biological parents and how he comes to terms with his own identity as an adoptee.

The portrayal of Cinnamon's parents is particularly loving. They are two kind, well-meaning people who do their best to support Cinnamon; they, too, must learn as they piece together the meaning of Cinnamon's mysterious, persistent symptoms. The author takes



great joy in detailing all the foods that Cinnamon eats, and as he travels through India, the reader goes on a miniature culinary journey as well. While this adoption story takes place in an Indian cultural context, there is something for everyone to discover for themselves in this touching story of learning and self-discovery.

—Daemion Lee, educator & ex-editor of *Skipping Stones*.



Barefoot Dreams of Petra Luna.

A novel by Alda P. Dobbs. Middle grades. Sourcebooks.

At the height of the Mexican Revolution, in the fall of 1913, twelve-year-old Petra Luna, along with her six-year-old sister Amelia, her grandmother, and her baby brother are forced to flee their small village in northern Mexico. Their perilous journey to the U.S. border and Petra's incredible heroism are the subjects of this powerful book by Dobbs.

After her mom passed away during childbirth and her father was forcibly recruited into the Federal Army of Mexico, Petra is left to guide the rest of her family to safety. On the way, she exhibits strength and tenacity well beyond her years. She listens and learns quickly in order to survive each day along the route. She meets notable characters of the Revolution along the way, such as Marietta Torres, an accomplished and powerful woman rebel leader. She learns to find and accept help and also to provide help if she can. Their very survival is dependent on her efforts.

As the civil war runs its course, Petra and her family continue with their search for their father, hoping he has escaped the army. Finally they are able to cross the border and feel a sense of safety. Now, Petra can begin to bring her dreams to reality.

In telling what is certainly a war story, Dobbs paints Petra and the other characters as fully human, capable of extreme acts of compassion and friendship in the midst of it all. It is a story of hope, courage and love of family.

—Herb Everett, educator and grandparent, Oregon.

Nature and Ecology Books



Tour the Tundra: Biome Explorers. By Laura Perdew; illustr. Lex Cornell. Ages 5–8. Nomad Press.

Tour the Tundra introduces an important and distant biome consisting of the Arctic,

Antarctic, and the alpine tundra for early readers. We human beings rarely live in this biome so it is great to know basics of this ecosystem. It explains how species survive in this biome even during winter season when it's very cold. It shows wildlife and their habitats year round. Adaptations by lifeforms prove to be very important for their survival, for this biome has harsh conditions. The reader learns how plants and animals change their habits during the various seasons as the temperatures go up or down.

I really enjoyed looking at the illustrations—colorful, bright, realistic, and eye-catching. Children would enjoy looking at them and using context clues to learn about the biome.

Tour the Tundra is part of a set of five science picture books that introduce young readers to the various biomes on our planet. Appropriate for ages 5–8.

—Vajra Vanukuri, grade 7, California; with help from Arun Toké, editor.



Safe Travels for Squirrels. By Maxime Bonneau with Joanne Mattern. Picture Book. Red Chair Press.

Squirrels are good athletes. They climb and jump from tree to tree. But when squirrels live near busy streets, the consequences can be fatal.

Safe Travel for Squirrels tells the story, in text and photographs, of people in France who were concerned that the Red Squirrel was in serious decline. They designed and built a rope bridge in 2010 to help the squirrels cross the highway. A group that climbs mountains donated thick heavy rope, used pulleys to tighten the rope, and climbed the trees for installation.

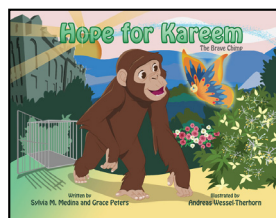
Every morning a villager used pulleys to pull up a

bucket of food to train squirrels to use the bridge. Hazelnuts are the red squirrels' favorite food, and they spread the seeds and grow new trees that keep the forest healthy.

The book also features a 60-year-old squirrel bridge in the US—the Nutty Narrows Bridge in Longview, Washington.

After reading this book, I decided to purchase special license plates that raise money to build wildlife overpasses across highways for a variety of animals, including much bigger ones.

—Charlotte Behm, educator, Oregon



Hope For Kareem: The Brave Chimp. By Sylvia Medina & Grace Peters; illustr. Andreas Wessel-Therhorn. Picture Book, elem. grades. Green Kids Club.

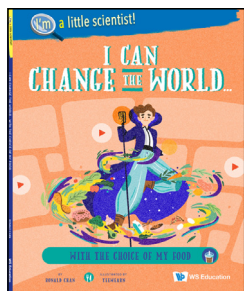
Kareem is a chimpanzee who, as a baby, feels love and companionship, but then has the unfortunate fate of being sent off to be used for medical research. He says from his small crate that the people at the lab aren't nice, and he always feels pain, fear, isolation, and sickness.

The book manages to keep a positive outlook alive by having a caterpillar named Hope appear in Kareem's crate. She keeps telling him that he must be strong and that she will help him. This is a nice touch to introduce a character that lightens up an otherwise bleak yet important story about the treatment of animals.

Kareem and Hope have a happy ending as they are finally taken to Project Chimps, a sanctuary in Georgia for chimps retired from research. There, Kareem teaches other chimps a song he learned in his youth about being a chimp, wild and free.

(In June 2023, the Oregon legislature passed a bill requiring more accountability from the Oregon National Primate Research Center after numerous primates died or were injured due to abuse, neglect, and negligence. The Oregon facility is one of seven national primate research centers in the United States.)

—Charlotte Behm, educator, Oregon.



I Can Change the World: With the Choice of my Food. By Ronald Chan; illustr. Yeewearn. Picture Book/Elementary grades. W. S. Education.

This book has such a powerful message: help your community, your world, and be a food saver!

Using colorful comic strip illustrations, the author breaks down complex science in a way that children can devour it. Every page is spread with colorful illustrations.

A young boy grows up as a food hawker because his parents owned a food stall. Their stall was in an open market location where all kinds of food dishes, cooked and uncooked, were sold. He couldn't help but notice how much food was wasted each day. He did some research and discovered one-third of the world's food is discarded. And that is not good for the environment! Cows and other animals as well as certain plants produce methane gas, which keeps heat from escaping the planet. This contributes to global warming. The young man becomes "Mr. Food Snapper" by day. He took pictures of all the wonderful foods surrounding him, and then shared these dishes on his blog.

At night he becomes "Mr. Food Saver," a superhero. He takes his message to different diners and restaurants. His message to everyone is to take only the amount of food you can eat. Mr. Food Saver explains how uneaten food is put into an incinerator or taken to a landfill. Either way, our environment is polluted. He talks about the use of fossil fuels and how they impact the atmosphere. This author covers an impressive amount of science in a way that children will appreciate and take to heart.

—Paulette Ansari, retired librarian & storyteller, Georgia.

Dr. Rosie Helps the Animals. By Jennifer Welborn; illustr. Rozillia MH. (Also available as a Spanish/English bilingual edition: *La Doctora Rosie Ayuda a los Animales*). Picture Book/Elem. grades. Waterbear Publishing.

What happens when an elephant has a stuffy nose? Or when an owl has an allergy? These are some of the puzzles that Rosie, whose aspiration it is to be a veteri-

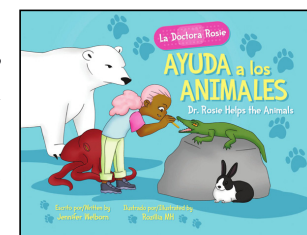
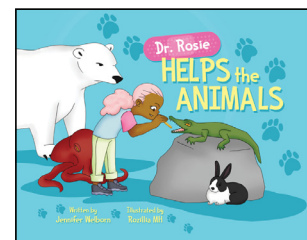
narian, tries to figure out in this delightful book.

It is by now a truism that too few books focus on girls interested in the fields commonly known as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics); even fewer celebrate African American and other girls of color and, when they do, such books tend to be devoid of a sense of humor and whimsy.

Dr. Rosie Helps the Animals fills all these gaps. Written by Jennifer Welborn, an award-winning middle school science teacher, the book is an imaginative but not fantastical take on how Rosie, the protagonist, envisions her future life as a veterinarian to a host of unlikely patients including a rabbit, a pig, and even a giraffe, among others. Throughout the story, Rosie's mother, a real-life veterinarian, guides her in looking for ways to help them. The cures recommended are both natural and understandable to even the youngest readers, with a caveat: "Important: Consult a licensed veterinarian before using any of the natural remedies listed in this book."

With each animal she meets, whether a rabbit with an earache, a pig with a tummy ache, or a giraffe with a sore throat, Rosie tries to help with science-based remedies. There are no magical cures, just simple but reasonable treatments. For example, she treats the rabbit who has an earache with an aloe plant to help alleviate the pain, and the giraffe receives water with honey to help soothe his very long throat.

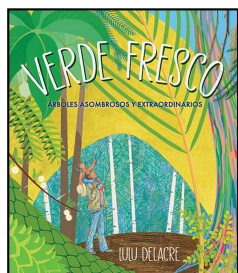
Readers are certain to be engaged in the remedies Rosie comes up with. I especially like the fact that the title reinforces Rosie's future ambition to be a veterinarian by using "Dr." in front of her name. This is the kind of gesture that will help readers, particularly girls, know that they have a right to dream, and that their dreams are attainable. This book will be a welcome addition to any classroom for young children by teachers who want to introduce their students to the world



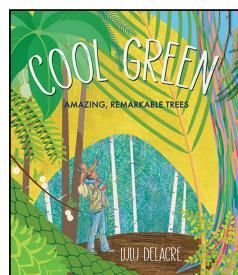
of veterinary science in a relatable way, and by parents who want to expand their children's understanding of some of the medical problems animals might really have. The text is both humorous and convincing, with illustrations that are colorful and appealing. This is sure to become a staple for young children of all backgrounds.

—Sonia Nieto, *Professor Emerita, Univ. of Massachusetts.*

Cool Green: *Amazing Remarkable Trees.* By Lulu Delacre. (Also available in Spanish:



Verde Fresco: *Arboles Asombrosos y Extraordinarios*). Picture book/Elem. grades. Candlewick Press.



There may be tens of thousands of species of trees, but **Cool Green**, illustrated and written by Lulu Delacre, gives us a selection of a few of the most unique and unusual trees from around the world. She draws and writes about each tree in poem-like verses well suited for the very young reader.

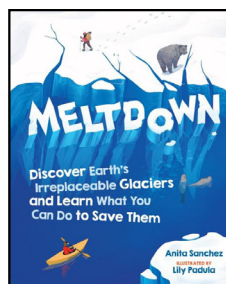
There's the coconut palm with the world's second-largest seed and the upside-down baobab tree that blooms just for one night. The General Sherman giant sequoia is the "world's biggest clean air machine" and a live Wollemi Pine, thought to have been extinct for millions of years, was discovered in Australia. The author has found the strangest and most fascinating trees for us to reflect on. In the back of the book are additional facts about each tree.

Verde Fresco: *Arboles Asombrosos y Extraordinarios*, a sister book in Spanish, is great for the beginning language student or the young Spanish speaker. Both books present a delightful celebration of trees around the world.

—Paul Dix, *world traveler, author and photographer.*

Meltdown: *Discover Earth's Irreplaceable Glaciers and Learn What You Can Do to Save Them.* By Anita Sanchez; illustr. Lily Padula. Ages 9 and up. Workman Publishing.

Glaciers are fascinating and complex. The study of gla-



ciers, or glaciology, combines many fields of study including physics, mathematics, geology, and even climatology. This hard ice, under its own weight and pressure becomes plastic and flows, albeit slowly, like a river. **Meltdown** written by Anita Sanchez and illustrated by Lily

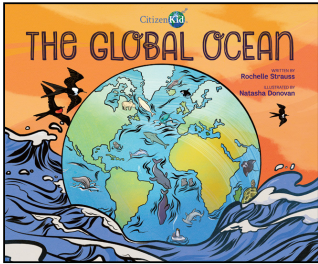
Padula describes this phenomenon clearly and simply for all of us to understand.

The impacts of changes in glacial activity affects us all. In the last several decades, due to climate warming, there has been dramatic melting and receding of glaciers worldwide. With one sixth of the global population dependent on water from glaciers and with the inevitable rise in sea level as a result of the melting, we are in dire need of immediate and major changes in our lifestyles. Extraction and use of fossil fuels as well as certain agricultural practices must be curtailed if we are going to change our trajectory into self-destruction.

This book is an invaluable source of information and a call to action. It stresses the need to respect nature and to understand the interrelationship of all living and nonliving elements in our environment. The melting of glaciers is the focus of this book, but it tells us that it is just one of the many indicators of a warming planet. I strongly recommend **Meltdown** for its storehouse of information and for the encouragement it gives us, individually and collectively, to get to work.

—Paul Dix, *world traveler, author and photographer.*

Teaching Resources



The Global Ocean By Rochelle Strauss; illustr. Natasha Donovan. Picture Book. Elem. & middle grades. Kids Can Press.

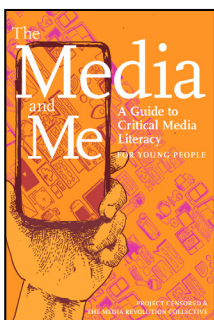
Did you know that contrary to how we are used to thinking that there are sev-

eral oceans—the Atlantic, the Pacific, the Arctic, and the Indian Ocean, for example—in truth, there is only one body of water that is all connected? Currents connect these large bodies of water, making one huge ocean.

The Global Ocean is a strikingly illustrated book appropriate for any budding marine biologist or youth interested in how our shared planet works. Strauss presents in-depth facts about our world in an engaging way, going beyond the “pollution is bad” rhetoric everybody has heard, exploring the actual mechanics of the ocean’s many ecosystems, just how important it is to life on Earth, and how humanity has changed it to the detriment of both other creatures and ourselves.

The Global Ocean presents many examples of how everyday actions can affect the ocean and how the ocean affects our everyday life in ways readers may not have thought of before. I myself had never considered how plastic-based fabrics being washed in the laundry may break down, with the plastic fibers produced getting sent to the ocean without said fabrics ever being thrown away. It also provides solutions already in action for readers to practice and/or help support, such as eating sustainably caught fish or raising communal awareness about the importance of the ocean.

—Hailey Bonebrake, high school student intern, Oregon.



The Media and Me: A Guide to Critical Media Literacy for Young People. By Project Censored and the Media Revolution Collective. Grades 6-12. Triangle Square Books for Young Readers / The Censored Press.

This book aims to educate about media consumption—not just watching screens, but also looking behind the screens—to understand how media con-

tent is created. Using the analogy of a clock, the book argues that it is important not just to understand how to use a clock to tell time, but also to understand how a clock works. The book looks at media through the themes of meaning, access and representation, and validity, aiming to analyze the media we consume; who has access to consumption of that media; who is represented in it; and whether that content is accurate and true. The rationale for this book stems, in part, from a 2016 paper from Stanford that found that young people (middle school through college-age) had low levels of media literacy, including difficulty identifying news versus advertising and difficulty identifying media bias.

Ten authors collaborated to write this book, including professors, teachers and undergraduate students. The book moves from simpler definitions such as “What are media?” to analysis of advertising, news and journalism, and suggestions for action steps.

An example of the sort of critical media literacy that the authors advocate for is the episode of rapper Nicki Minaj’s tweets about COVID vaccines. In 2021, Minaj expressed skepticism on Twitter about a public event’s vaccine requirement and stated she would not get vaccinated until she had “done enough research.” In their analysis of this event, the authors ask why her tweets were elevated by the media at all, and whose interests were advanced by the amplification of her views.

Other examples discussed in the book are far-ranging, including the kind of accents in the Disney movie “Aladdin;” how Franklin Roosevelt used his “Fireside Chats” to manage his public image; advertisers’ use of “blocklists” and how that impacts coverage of humanitarian events; and the concept of “the user is the product,” which underlies free services such as Facebook or Google search.

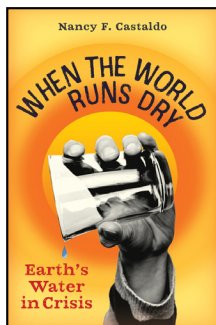
This book is aimed at young people, but it is an educational resource for media users of all ages.

—Daemion Lee, educator & ex-editor of *Skipping Stones*.

When The World Runs Dry: Earth’s Water in Crisis. By Nancy F. Castaldo. Grades 6-12. Algonquin Young Readers.

Rhetorically, the author begins by asking us: “You

just turn on the faucet, right?” The author goes on to cite various statistics detailing the human strain on the world’s water supply: 1,400 gallons of water to produce a single burger, including the water used to feed the cows; 2,000 gallons of water to produce one pair of jeans; 25 gallons for a shower; 7 gallons to flush the toilet.



Water resources are increasingly strained: On the average, some 6,000 children die each day worldwide from unsafe drinking water, according to UN estimates; major cities like Cape Town in South Africa and Chennai in India have faced water shortages in recent years. The author quotes various indigenous people, like Wenona T. Singel, a chief appellate justice for the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, who says, “In the Anishinaabe culture, water is sacred—water is life. Water has its own spirit.”

The author divides the topic of water supply and access into various types of problems, always accompanied by multiple case studies that show the concrete impacts of the water issues. In the water infrastructure chapter, the author discusses the challenges of getting water from the source to people’s homes, illustrated by the plight of Flint, Michigan and the persistent issue of lead in the water. Other chapters deal with industrial pollution, fracking problems, and agricultural pollution, with case studies ranging from New York to Colorado to Florida; as well as harmful algal blooms—specifically in Lake Erie—and the impact of pharmaceutical pollution on the Chesapeake Bay. The author includes chapters discussing water supply issues, flooding and sea level rise, and the impact of water stress on nations.

The last two chapters discuss potential solutions and how the reader can make a difference. This includes discussions of bans on plastic water bottles and massive desalination projects led by countries like Australia and Israel. Tucson, Arizona is discussed as a model for water conservation, including use of native desert plants in landscaping and the city’s efforts to recharge the local groundwater supply. The discussion of “water warriors”—individuals taking a stand—was particularly

inspiring, including Tiara Darisaw, Founder of Children for Flint, and Darlene Arviso, the Water Lady.

—Daemion Lee, educator & ex-editor of *Skipping Stones*.

The 2024 Book Awards program will be announced later this year.

Our Autumn issue (available September 1, 2023) will feature the 2023 Youth Honor Awards, the Annual Book Awards, the Asian Celebration Haiku Contest, and the Celebrate America Creative Writing Contest for fifth graders.



You may order a copy of the issue for \$9 (includes postage).

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