



Youth Staff Picks

May 2021

Felix and the Monsters

by Josh and Monica Holtsclaw — E Hol | Picture Book

Felix is supposed to be guarding a wall against the monsters on the other side. All that he really wants is to do is play music. One day he hears music coming from the top of the wall. One of the monsters from the other side hears his music and invites him over the wall. He and the others are all surprised at how much fun they can have together. (LD)

What's Inside a Flower?

by Rachel Ignatofsky — j 582.1 Ign | Nonfiction, Botany

Flowers can grow almost anywhere – in the desert, on mountain tops, and even in soggy swamps. Have you ever wondered how? All will be explained in this beautifully illustrated book. From seed to full grown flower and all the steps in between, question no more! (JL)

When you Trap a Tiger

by Tae Keller — j Kel | ebook and audiobook on [OVERDRIVE](#) | Fiction

Lily and her family have just been through a tremendous loss. Now they've moved in with Lily's sick Grandmother, her beloved Halmoni. When Lily meets a magical tiger that offers her a deal to heal Halmoni, she has to decide if she should trust the tiger. This Newbery Award winner tells an exceptional story full of family history and tradition and the courageous power of love. (EK)

Ground Zero

by Alan Gratz — j Kor | audiobook on [HOOPLA](#) | Fiction, Historical and Contemporary

On September 11, 2001, Brandon goes to work with his father who works on the 107th floor of the North Tower of the World Trade Center when an airplane flies into the building. Brandon is headed to the underground mall when the attack happens and is separated from his dad. In 2019, when Reshmina, who lives in Afghanistan, takes in a wounded American soldier, her twin brother threatens to tell the Taliban he is living under their roof. She must stop him in order to save the soldier, her family, and the village she lives in. Recommended for 6th grade and up due to the sensitive topic. (EM)



Grace Banker and Her Hello Girls Answer the Call

by Claudia Friddell; illustrated by Elizabeth Baddeley — j 940.3 Fri | Nonfiction, History

Subtitled “The Heroic Story of WWI Telephone Operators,” this book tells about the first female members of the U.S. Signal Corps — in fact, the first women to serve in the U.S. military. Grace Banks was put in charge of that first group of thirty-three switchboard operators overseas, keeping the phone lines open and connecting calls between General Headquarters and the front lines throughout the war. It’s a remarkable piece of history, with lively writing and illustrations. (PS)

Squish, Squash, Squished

by Rebecca Kraft Rector — E Rec | Picture Book

With a nod to folktales that present the notion that what once felt like not enough room can actually begin to feel like plenty of room, this picture book has siblings squabbling in the backseat of a car while Mom in the driver’s seat picks up more and more noisy animals on their way to the farmers market. Predictable for adults, fun sound words, and kids will relate. (AE)

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Someone Builds the Dream

by Lisa Wheeler; illustrated by Loren Long — E Whe | Picture Book

Here’s a terrific, inspiring picture book tribute to both the dreamers and the builders of the world, two halves of a whole. The author and illustrator make cameo appearances! “All across this great big world/ there’s lots of work to do./ It takes a team to build a dream,/ a skilled, hard-working crew.” (PS)

Wings of Olympus

by Kallie George — j Geo | ebook and audiobook on [HOOPLA](#) | Fiction, Fantasy

Pippa is a foundling who just lost her job working in a stable on the outskirts of Athens. Desperate, alone, and scared, because working with horses is all she knows and loves, she falls asleep and wakes up on Mount Olympus. Somehow she was chosen as a contestant in a race to decide which winged horse will be Zeus’ next horse. She needs to learn how to succeed so she can stay with the Gods and her horse companion. (LD)



Take Back the Block

by Chrystal D. Giles — j Gil | Contemporary Fiction

Wes just wants to hang with his crew – play video games, shoot some hoops in the park, eat dinners together. It’s only when his own parents receive a postcard from a real estate developer, promising big cash if they sell, that Wes becomes acutely aware of what's actually happening in his beloved Kensington Oaks. Gentrification. Sure, change happens, but is this kind ok? (AE)

Sweet Dreamers

by Isabelle Simler — E Sim | Picture Book

Learn about these eight animals as they settle in for the night. Colorful scratchboard art depicts a different animal on each page along with a poem about how each one sleeps and dreams. (JL)

Stay Healthy with Sesame Street: Understanding Coronavirus

by Mary Lindeen — j 616.24 Ses | ebook on [HOOPLA](#) | Nonfiction, Health

Favorite Sesame Street characters explain the coronavirus in a kid friendly and reassuring way – sharing ideas on interacting with friends and family while staying safe, having fun at home, staying healthy, and highlighting the many different helpers in our communities. Final pages include easy discussion questions for children and families. (EK)

Masterminds

by Gordon Korman — j Kor | ebook and audiobook on [HOOPLA](#) and [OVERDRIVE](#) | Science Fiction

In the peaceful small town of Serenity, New Mexico, where everything is always harmonious, Eli and his friends discover that the adults there are behind a scientific experiment that involves kids being cloned from different criminal masterminds. If these kids try to leave their community, they become deathly ill! No adults can be trusted! (EM)

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My Heart

by Corinna Luyken — E Luy | Picture Book

Rhyming text with black, white, and yellow illustrations fill the pages of this book about feelings and self-acceptance. Sometimes we feel joy, other times we feel sadness. So many emotions fill our hearts. As this book encourages us to explore each type of emotion, search the illustrations for the subtle heart shapes, and listen to your inner guide. (JL)



Amari and the Night Brothers

by B.B. Alston — j Als | Fiction, Fantasy

Amari is having a bad year. Her brother Quinton has been missing for six months and presumed dead. No one knows what happened to him. Left to wonder, Amari and her mother are desperately lonely. The kids at school are mean to Amari because she comes from a poor background. She has no one to talk to until she gets a strange, last minute invitation to join her brother's old summer camp. (LD)

Race to the Bottom of the Earth: Surviving Antarctica

by Rebecca E. F. Barone — j 919.89 Bar | Nonfiction, Explorers, Survival

Wow. Four sets of intrepid polar adventurers want to be the first to reach the South Pole, each with their own methods, for their own reasons. Two groups, led by Roald Amundsen and Robert Scott, travel across the treacherously deadly landscape in the early 1900's; the other two are individuals aiming to do solo trips just a few years ago. An in-depth comparison. Wow. (AE)

Blue Ridge Babies 1, 2, 3

by Laura Sperry Gardner — E Gar | Picture Book

This wonderful picture book is full of the super cute baby animals and beautiful scenery of the Blue Ridge Mountains and teaches counting, baby animal names, habitats, and more! (EK)

Don't Hug Doug: He Doesn't Like it

by Carrie Finison — E Fin | Picture Book

Even though Doug doesn't like hugs, he does like a lot of other things, such as high fives, sorting his rock collection, drawing with chalk, and harmonica bands. He's just not a hugger! (EM)

Connect the Dots

by Keith Calbrese — j Cal | audiobook on [HOOPLA](#) | Fiction, Mystery

When Oliver and Frankie start middle school, it's not quite what they expected. Bullies — yes. Teacher trouble — yes. But who could predict a cardamom shortage, a new girl who's a hacker, and the FBI getting into the mix? What if random events are not random at all? What if, no matter how wacky things seem, there is actually a genius at work in the background? *Connect the Dots* is perfect for readers who like off-the-wall mystery and adventure and also enjoy school stories with lots of humor. (PS)



Elevator Bird

by Sarah Williamson — E Wil | Picture Book

Elevator Bird loves his job at a busy city hotel. He helps the guests get where they need to go and always has a kind word. His only regret is that he doesn't get out much. He spends all of his time in the hotel since his own room is in the basement. His friends get together to make a new space for him to enjoy the outdoors. (LD)

The Someday Suitcase

by Corey Ann Haydu — j Hay | ebook on [HOOPLA](#) | Contemporary Fiction

Clover and Danny have been best friends since they were babies. When Clover learns the word “symbiosis” in fifth grade, she feels that it describes the way they complement each other: no Clover without Danny, no Danny without Clover. Then Danny gets sick, and Clover decides that it's up to her to save him. She knows her plan will work — she and Danny have bought an oversize suitcase for their next great adventure. This is a heart-breaker, but you will love Clover and Danny. (PS)

Houdini and Me

by Dan Gutman — j Gut | Fiction

Harry Mancini, 11 years old, lives a happy life in Harry Houdini's old house! This has given him a lot of time to think about and research what Houdini was like and obsess over magic. He might want to become a magician himself someday. Other than that, Harry has a really normal life, until one day when his best friend Zeke convinces him to do something that only stupid kids get hurt doing. Guess what what happened to Harry, and it changed his whole life! A fun read with a few magic trick “how to's”! (JL)

Nature Out of Balance: How Invasive Species are Changing the Planet

by Merrie-ellen Wilcox — j 578.62 Wil | ebook on [HOOPLA](#) | Nonfiction, Environment

Here's a straightforward discussion about a very complicated issue. What makes a species become invasive? (You'll read about many all-star invasives!) Ecosystems have always been changing, is this really any different? (Yes, and no.) If an invasive species spreads too easily, crowds out others, and resists control, then haven't humans become the most invasive species on planet Earth? Read all about prevention, conservation, restoration, and adaptation! (AE)

Twenty-One Steps: Guarding the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

by Jeff Gottesfeld — j 355 Gor | Nonfiction, Military History

Since July 2, 1937, sentinel guards have been keeping vigil over the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington to remember the fallen, nameless soldiers who were unable to be reunited with their families. These guards keep watch over this tomb 24 hours a day, in every type of weather to honor these fallen soldiers. It is an ultimate privilege to earn this post. (EM)



I Love You, Mommy

edited by DK — Board Book Ilo | Fiction

Adorable photos and sweet rhyming words express the love between animal babies and their mothers in this new board book. (EK)