

Annotations

Andrews, Jan. **Winter of Peril: The Newfoundland Diary of Sophie Loveridge**. Scholastic Canada, 2005. ISBN: 0-7791-1409-4 Hardcover

Genre: Historical fiction

Part of the *Dear Canada* series, this story is told through a series of journal entries written by Sophie. It recounts the story of how her idealistic and romantic father insists on moving the family to an isolated part of Newfoundland against the best advice of others. Sophie's mother is resentful of the move and refuses to adapt to her new surroundings. The family is only able to survive the terrible winter of 1765 because of Sophie's hard work and resourcefulness.

Armstrong, Alan. **Whittington**. Yearling, 2006. ISBN: 978-0375828652 Paperback

Genre: Fantasy

Honours: Newbery Honor Book, 2006

In this animal fantasy, children and animals can converse. The cat, who is a descendent of Dick Whittington's famous feline, relates the family history of Dick's adventures. The chapters describing Dick Whittington's escapades are interspersed with those describing the events presently occurring in the barnyard. Using simple language, the book touches on issues of dyslexia and non-traditional families as it celebrates friendship, kindness and the power of story.

Teacher's guide: http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/teachers_guides/9780375828652.pdf

Attema, Martha. **Hero**. Orca, 2003. ISBN: 978-1551432519 Paperback

Genre: Historical fiction

Honours: Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario Writer's Award, 2006

Set during the last winter of World War II, the main character is Izaak, a Jewish boy in Amsterdam who must leave his mother and their hiding place. Saved by a resistance worker, he is brought to a farm in the northern part of the Netherlands. Becoming 'Jan', a name given to him to hide him from the Nazis, he settles into a farming life and befriends Hero, a back stallion that is also being hidden from the Nazis. On the eve of liberation from German rule, Jan becomes a real hero by creating a plan to save himself and the prize-winning stallion from discovery. The holocaust is experienced through young Jan, who learns of the kindness of strangers and the importance of social justice. Engaging and suspenseful for all readers.

Avi. **Crispin: Cross of Lead**. Hyperion, 2004. ISBN: 978-0786816583 Paperback

Genre: Historical fiction

Honours: Newbery Medal, 2003

Born in medieval England, Crispin endures extreme poverty of both body and spirit. When accused of a murder he did not commit, Crispin is forced to flee his village with only his dead mother's lead cross. Confused and frightened, he meets up with a travelling juggler named Bear who opens Crispin's eyes to new ideas and to the realization of his own self worth. The potentially life-changing secret written on the lead cross puts them both in danger and forces Crispin into the unexpected role of hero. For the first time, he realizes the right to make decisions about his own life. Followed by the sequel: **Crispin: At the Edge of the World**

Babbitt, Natalie. **Jack Plank Tells Tales**. Michael Di Capua Books, 2007. ISBN: 978-0545004961 Hardcover

Genre: Fantasy

Jack was a pirate who just doesn't have the knack of plundering. Well-liked by his shipmates, it isn't until times are hard that he reluctantly puts ashore to seek new work. And so it was he ends up in Ms. DelFresno's boarding house in the town of Saltwash in the Carribbean. Each line of work explored is not suitable for one reason or another as Jack explains each night over supper with his new friends. Just when Jack thinks that he will have to go back to sea, they hit upon the perfect solution. This is an entertaining story full of tall tales of the sea.

Banks, Kate. **Dillon Dillon**. Douglas & McIntyre, 2005. ISBN: 978-0374417154 Paperback

Genre: Realistic fiction

Dillon is spending the summer with his family at Lake Waban and trying to figure out why his parents gave him a name like Dillon Dillon. The parallels between Dillon's life and that of a young loon with whom he builds a relationship help him to accept the knowledge that he is adopted. This is a heartwarming story of a 10-year-old boy coming to terms with his own identity and the meaning of family.

Birdsall, Jean. **The Penderwicks**. Yearling, 2007. ISBN: 978-0440420477 Paperback

Genre: Realistic fiction

Honours: National Book Award, 2005

The story centers on the vacation of four young sisters and their recently widowed father. The setting of their unforgettable summer vacation is a cottage on a huge estate. The girls and the estate owner eventually become friends. When they discover their new friend's desire is to attend music school rather than the military school his parents choose, the Penderwick sisters help him realize his dreams. Followed by the sequel: **The Penderwicks on Gardam Street**.

Teacher's guide: http://www.randomhouse.com/catalog/teachers_guides/9780440420477.pdf

Clements, Andrew. **No Talking**. Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 2007 ISBN: 978-1416909835
Paperback

Genre: Realistic fiction

Inspired by Ghandi's example, Dave Packer engages in a vow of silence. This is no small feat for one of the consummate talkers of the grade five class at Laketon Elementary School. This class is known as the "Unshushables" to their teachers because the entire class chatters incessantly. Dave is the leader of the boys in the class while the talkative leader of the girls is Lynsey Burgess. Dave bets Lynsey that she can't beat him in his efforts to remain silent. As the girls and the boys are fierce rivals, the challenge evolves into a fierce competition between the two groups. Each group is determined to outlast the other. Who can stop talking the longest? Using the honour system, Lynsey and Dave keep score for their respective teams but neither side is prepared for the final results of the competition. Both the girls and the boys learn important lessons about the power of words in this engaging tale of school life.

Creech, Sharon. **Granny Torrelli Makes Soup**. Harper Collins, 2005. ISBN: 978-0439649315 Paperback

Genre: Realistic fiction

Twelve-year-old Rosie has a wonderful relationship with her Italian grandmother, whose stories and unconditional love help Rosie work out her anger with her friend Bailey. It is gradually revealed that Bailey is blind, but this fact doesn't define him. This easy read provides a fresh and honest look at friendship and acceptance.

Creech, Sharon. **Heartbeat**. Harper Collins, 2005. ISBN: 978-0060540241 Paperback

Genre: Verse novel

This novel is told in free verse by twelve-year-old Annie, who shares her passions for running and drawing and her perceptions of friendship and family. She has a strong bond with her frail grandfather and forms an equally strong one with her unborn sibling. Her unique personality shines through as she deals with the changes in her life.

See the author's website info on the novel: <http://www.sharoncreech.com/novels/13.asp>

Creech, Sharon. **Replay**. Harper Collins, 2007. ISBN: 978-0439862035 Paperback

Genre: Realistic fiction

Referred to as Fog Boy by his family for spacing out and entering into a daydreaming state at the drop of a hat, Leo is not thrilled to be given the role of the Crone in a class production. As he explores how to capture the character of an old lady, Leo begins to think about how his family members acted as children. He finds in the attic a journal that his father wrote at age 13. This is a cleverly written book about self discovery; capturing Leo's inner voice and thoughts.

Curtis, Christopher Paul. **Bud, not Buddy**. Yearling, 2002. ISBN: 978-0439402002 Paperback

Genre: Historical fiction

Honours: Newbery Medal, 2000; Coretta Scott King Award, 2000

Ten-year-old Bud escapes from a dismal foster home to search for the man he believes is his father. His quest is set in Michigan during the Depression and is filled with authentic historical detail. Heart-warming and humorous, the well-rounded characters bring to life the Black culture of jazz musicians in the 1930's.

Teacher's guide: <http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/catalog/display.pperl?isbn'9780385323062&view'tg>

DiCamillo, Kate. **Because of Winn Dixie**. Candlewick, 2001. ISBN: 978-0763616052 Paperback.

Genre: Realistic fiction

Honours: Newbery Honor, 2001; Young Reader's Choice Award, 2003; Parents' Choice Gold Award.

This is the story of Opal and her adopted dog Winn Dixie who helps her make friends with a variety of unique individuals: Miss Franny Block who is the local librarian; Gloria Dump who is nearly completely blind; and Otis who is an ex-con with a special gift for music. Opal spends the summer getting to know her new friends and learning more about her absent mother from her preacher father. A compelling story about friendship and growing up. Movie of the same name released in 2005.

DiCamillo, Kate. **The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane**. Candlewick, 2007. ISBN: 978-0763639877 Paperback

Genre: Fantasy

Honours: Boston Globe-Horn Book Award; Parents' Choice Awards Gold Award

Edward Tulane is a cold-hearted and vain china rabbit owned and adored by Abilene Tulane, his ten-year-old owner. Abilene believes her rabbit is perfect, but in return her rabbit has little respect for his owner. Through misadventure, Edward is lost at sea and begins a capricious journey which leads from the top of a garbage heap, to the bedside of a sick child, to the bustling streets of Memphis. With a renewed sense of humility, he finally learns the emptiness of arrogance and the fulfilment of love. Beautifully written and illustrated. Movie of the same name will be released in 2010.

Website for the novel: <http://www.edwardtulane.com/>

DiCamillo, Kate. **The Tale of Despereaux**. Candlewick, 2006. ISBN: 978-0763625290 Paperback

Genre: Fantasy

Honours: Newbery Medal, 2004

This is a fairytale about Despereaux Tilling, an unusual mouse who is drawn to music and stories and who is in love with a princess named Pea. Unable to conform to the Mouse Council's expectations, he is banished to the dungeon where rats prey on those who are sent to live in darkness. Challenged by the Rat Roscuro who covets a world of light, Despereaux Tilling proves his bravery and courage. A second plot follows Miggery Sow, a servant in the palace kitchen, who desires to find her place in the world as a princess. All characters find their lives intersect on their journeys to self-discovery. The direct voice of the narrator and short chapters make this book suitable for reading aloud. Animated movie of the same name has been released.

Ellis, Deborah. **The Breadwinner**. Groundwood Books, 2000. ISBN: 0888994168

Genre: Historical Fiction, Contemporary Fiction

Set in Kabul, Afghanistan during the Taliban regime, readers come to identify with Parvana's struggle for survival. Parvana's life is changed forever when her dad is arrested by the Taliban and she no longer has the freedom to go outside.

Ellis, Sarah. **Several Lives of Orphan Jack**. House of Anansi, 2004. Groundwood Books ISBN: 978-0888996183 Paperback

Genre: Fantasy

Honours: Mr. Christie's Book Award, 2003; IODE Violet Downey Book Award, 2004.

This story tells the tale of Orphan Jack, a boy who has lived all his life in an orphanage called, The Opportunities School for Orphans and Foundlings. Despite the wakeful nights and pure drudgery of life in the orphanage, Jack has a rich imagination and is full of fruitful ideas which can be bartered with townspeople at local fairs and markets. Taking on a role as the Master of Ideas, Orphan Jack determines that he can have control over his own destiny.

Funke, Cornelia. **Igraine the Brave**. The Chicken House, 2008. ISBN: 978-1905294657 Paperback

Genre: Fantasy

Igraine, who comes from a family of magicians, has no interest in magic but dreams of becoming a brave knight. Her family's prize possessions are the singing Books of Magic which are coveted by unscrupulous neighbours. When her parents are accidentally turned into pigs and the castle is attacked, it is up to Igraine to save the day and prove her bravery. She learns that being a knight is not as glamorous as it seems and there are different types of bravery.

Gaiman, Neil. **Coraline**. Harper Collins, 2003. ISBN: 978-0380807345 Paperback

Genre: Horror fiction

Honours: Hugo Award for Best Novella, 2003; Nebula Award for Best Novella; Locus Award; Bram Stoker Award 2002; British Science Fiction Award, 2002.

Also see Gaimon, Neil. Coraline Graphic Novel. Harper Collins Publishers, 2009 ISBN:0060825456 Paperback

This is a macabre story in which Coraline moves between her real world and a parallel universe when she explores a magical locked doorway. Her actions cause her parents to disappear and she gradually discovers that her alternate Mom is actually an evil entity that becomes increasingly menacing. Coraline, with the help of a cat and a secret stone, must face her fears in order to rescue her parents and other lost children trapped in this nightmarish situation. Deliciously scary for those who enjoy horror stories, this book is also available as a graphic novel. Animated movie to be released 2009.

Giff, Patricia Reilly. **All the Way Home**. Yearling, 2003. ISBN: 978-0440411826 Paperback

Genre: Historical fiction

Set in 1941 New York, Mariel struggles with her polio-stricken legs, and is cared for by a nurse named Loretta who has adopted her. Mariel secretly wishes to find her birth mother who disappeared while she was four and hospitalized with the life-threatening illness. An opportunity presents itself when Brick, Loretta's friend's son, comes to stay with them because a fire destroyed his family's apple orchard and forced his parents to find work elsewhere. Saddled with guilt about the destruction of their orchard, Brick wishes to return to home to assist an elderly neighbour with the apple harvest before the winter sets in. Pairing together, these friends run away to Windy Hill to confront the challenges which compel much of their young lives.

Giff, Patricia Reilly. **Pictures of Hollis Woods**. Yearling, 2004. ISBN: 978-0440415787 Paperback

Genre: Realistic fiction

Honours: Newbery Honor Book, 2003

An artistically talented twelve-year-old, Hollis Woods has been running from foster homes in hopes of finding a place where she belongs. She finds this place in the home of Josie Cahill, a retired art teacher, who lives on Long Island. Hollis quickly realizes that the role of caregiver is changing when Josie's memory begins to fail her. Throughout this ordeal she is tormented by fond memories of her placement with the Regan family. The love and dedication she displays to Josie reconnects them both to the people that they yearn for in their lives. TV movie of the same name was released in 2007.

Teacher's guide: <http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/catalog/display.pperl?isbn'9780385326551&view'tg>

Giff, Patricia Reilly. **Willow Run**. Yearling, 2007. ISBN: 978-0440238010 Paperback

Genre: Historical fiction

During the summer of 1944, Meggie Dillion's family moves to Michigan so her father can work in a plant constructing B-24 bombers for the war. This means leaving her beloved German American grandfather behind in New York state. As the story unfolds, Meggie comes to understand the meaning of sacrifice, prejudice and courage.

Hale, Shannon. **Princess Academy**. Bloomsbury, 2007. ISBN: 978-1599900735 Paperback

Genre: Fantasy

Honours: Newbery Honor Book, 2005

Miri's father believes that she is too small to work in the quarry that supports their mountain village. When word comes that the Prince will choose his bride from their community and that all girls between the ages of twelve and seventeen must attend a makeshift Princess Academy to prepare them, Miri is determined not to compete. This well-told story has a feminist component as well as elements of the prince-charming fairy tale. It explores the complexities of relationships and the role of education in opening new opportunities. The ability to communicate using stone adds a wonderful magical touch.

Hannigan, Katherine. **Ida B and Her Plans to Maximize Fun, Avoid Disaster, and (Possibly) Save the World**. Harper Collins, 2006. ISBN 9780439837156 Paperback

Genre: Realistic fiction

Honours: Josette Frank Award winner, 2004; IRA/CBC Teachers' Choice

Ida B. and her family live on an apple orchard in Wisconsin where Ida enjoys a special connection with the land and the trees. Her imagination and creativity are fostered by her relationship with her parents who home-school her. However, when her mother falls ill with cancer, Ida's idyllic life is disrupted. She has to attend Grade 4 in a regular school and accept the fact that part of the orchard will be sold to pay medical bills. Ida B. eventually realizes that she can't control all aspects of her life and that change may not always be a bad thing.

Henkes, Kevin. **Olive's Ocean**. Harper Collins, 2005. ISBN: 978-0060535452 Paperback

Genre: Realistic fiction

Honours: Newbery Honor Book, 2004; Booklist's Top of the List, 2004

Just before leaving on her family trip to Cape Cod, 12-year-old Martha receives a strange gift - a page from a journal of Olive Barstow, a deceased classmate she barely knew. Reading the girl's journal leads her to see how she and Olive could have been friends if Martha had taken the time to know her. She decides that she must do right by Olive and finds her own voice as she thinks about her future as a writer, her relationship with her grandmother, a boy neighbour and life in general.

Holm, Jennifer and Matthew. **Babymouse Number 1: Queen of the World**. Random House, 2005. ISBN: 978-0375832291

Genre: Graphic novels

Honours: Gryphon Award, 2006

This easy to read graphic novel is a light-hearted story about friendship and loyalty. Babymouse is desperate to be invited to the slumber party of the most popular girl in the class, Felicia Furrypaw. She thinks that this party will change her life from dull and predictable to exciting and glamorous. But once she receives the invitation, she realizes that she will hurt the feelings of her long time friend, Wilson, by not attending their regular movie night. Babymouse must decide what is important in her life and make the right choice. This is the first in the multi-volume Babymouse series.

Website for the series: <http://www.randomhouse.com/kids/babymouse/>
or the author's website: <http://www.jenniferholm.com/>

Holm, Jennifer. **Penny from Heaven**. Random House, 2006. ISBN: 978-0375836879 Hardcover

Genre: Historical fiction

Honours: Newbery Honor Book, 2007

Eleven-year-old Penny faces many challenges in this 1953 historical novel. Penny discovers why the two sides of her family do not talk to each other and what happened to her father. She learns to accept her mother's new boyfriend and the death of her beloved dog. Finally, she has to recover from a major accident in which her arm is severely damaged. Despite all of Penny's problems, this book is an optimistic portrayal of change.

Teacher guide: http://www.jenniferholm.com/pdf/teacherguide_pennyfromheaven.pdf

Horvath, Polly. **Everything on a Waffle**. Douglas & McIntyre, 2001. ISBN: 978-0888994424 Paperback

Genre: Realistic fiction

Honours: Newbery Honor Book, 2002; Mr. Christie Book Award; Sheila A. Egoff Children's Literature Prize

Primrose Squarp steadfastly refuses to believe that her parents have died in a storm at sea. The local residents of Coal Harbour on Vancouver Island try to help her accept her loss, but to no avail. The town's eccentric characters who surround Primrose illuminate her own quirky qualities as she interacts with: a military uncle who is branching out into real estate; a fussy guidance counsellor; a forgetful neighbour; some unusual foster parents; and the owner of a local restaurant who serves every menu item on a waffle. This is a delightful story interspersed with recipes from the restaurant.

King-Smith, Dick. **Cat Lady**. Yearling, 2007. ISBN: 978-0440420316 Paperback

Genre: Historical fiction

Muriel Ponsonby lives alone except for her many cats. She is sure they are the reincarnation of friends, family and even of royalty. The author leads readers to see beyond the stereotype and eccentricities of her character and discover the warm and caring individual beneath.

King-Smith, Dick. **Lady Lollipop**. Walker Children's Paperbacks, 2001. 978-0744578720 Paperback

Genre: Fantasy

Princess Penelope has everything in life, and should be happy and content. Unfortunately, she has been instead spoiled by her parents and the servants of the castle. She bullies her father the King into letting her have a pig for her eighth birthday. Lollipop is given to Penelope, along with a pig trainer named Johnny. The gifted and talented owner Johnny shows Penelope how to train Lollipop but in the process is training more than the pig. A delightful and amusing easy read.

Kinsey-Warnock, Natalie. **Gifts From The Sea**. Yearling, 2005. ISBN:978-0440419709 Paperback

Genre: Historical fiction

Set in the 1850's, twelve-year-old Quila MacKinnon lives alone with her father, a lighthouse keeper, on a remote island in Maine. When they decide to keep a baby that washes ashore, their lives are drastically changed. Two years later the baby's aunt turns up unexpectedly and Quila is torn with jealousy and fear of losing Cecelia. What she doesn't realize is the potential that is there to expand rather than divide her family.

Little, Jean. **Dancing Through the Snow**. Scholastic, 2007. ISBN:978-0439938235 Hardcover

Genre: Realistic fiction

Ten-year-old Min has lived most of her life in foster care since she was abandoned in a public washroom at age three. She is surprised when the compassionate Doctor Jess Hart rescues her from the Children's Aid office for a couple of weeks to see how they get along. But as the days turn into weeks, Min and Jess find themselves building a life together in the first loving home that Min has ever known. This is a captivating story of hope and the building of trusting relationships.

MacLachlan, Patricia **Edward's Eyes**. Atheneum, 2007. ISBN:978-1416927433 Hardcover

Genre: Realistic fiction

A moving family story - told from his brother's perspective - about Edward, who loves baseball but who dies in a tragic accident. When his parents donate his organs, his wonderful eyes go to a perfect recipient. Patricia MacLachlan's sparse and evocative writing elicits an intense emotional response as she describes the remarkable and loving relationships between the siblings.

MacLachlan, Patricia. **Grandfather's Dance**. Harper Collins, 2006. ISBN: 978-0061340031 Paperback

Genre: Historical fiction

The fifth and final book in the **Sarah, Plain and Tall** sequence. Cassie is now in fourth grade, baby Jack is now a toddler and Anna is preparing to get married. Cassie's relationship to her taciturn grandfather and her love for little Jack helps her to appreciate the amazing bond between the two. MacLachlan unerringly captures the nuances of family life - and love - in this heart-warming finale.

MacLachlan, Patricia. **More Perfect than the Moon**. Harper Collins, 2005. ISBN:978-0439775281 Paperback

Genre: Historical fiction

The fourth book in the **Sarah, Plain and Tall** sequence. Cassie is in third grade and determined to become a writer. Her keen observations record the changes in her family, such as Anna's impending marriage and the imminent birth of a sibling, and her emotional responses to them. The story ends with the arrival of her new baby brother - a gift more perfect than the moon.

McCaughrean, Geraldine. **Peter Pan in Scarlet**. Aladdin Paperbacks, 2008. ISBN: 978-1416918097 Paperback

Genre: Fantasy

Set twenty years after the original Peter Pan, the now grown-up Lost Boys begin having dreams about Neverland and wake to find that objects from their lost boyhoods have resurfaced. They realize that something is wrong in Neverland, and they return to try and help. This official sequel marks the reunion of Wendy, John and other Lost Boys with Peter Pan, however, Neverland has changed since their childhood adventures and is now darker and more dangerous. There are challenges and adventures faced by a blend of new and old characters on an unforgettable quest.

McNaughton, Janet. **The Saltbox Sweater**. Creative Book, 2001. ISBN:978-1894294355 Paperback

Genre: Realistic fiction

Set in rural Newfoundland after the Cod Moratorium, fourth-grader Katie is affected by her community's out-migration. Janet McNaughton portrays a vanishing culture through Katie's eyes as she, her mother and her grandmother together forge a future in the changed economic and social realities in which they find themselves.

See the author's Teacher Resource Page for suggestions in using this novel in the classroom: <http://www.janetmcnaughton.ca/sbteacher.html>

Morpurgo, Michael. **The Amazing Story of Adolphus Tips**. Harper Collins, 2006. ISBN:978-0007182466 Paperback.

Genre: Historical fiction

Honours: Parents' Choice Silver Award, 2006; Sheffield Children's Book Award 2006.

Set in Britain during the Second World War, this is the story of Lily Tregenza and her adventurous cat, Tips. Lily's present-day letter to her grandson includes excerpts from a diary she kept as a young girl. Her village was used as a training site for allied troops and all the villagers were forced to relocate. Tips' refusal to abandon his home, however, set in motion a series of events that resulted in enduring friendships crossing age, gender, nationality, and race. This touching story portrays the impact of world events on the lives of ordinary people.

Morpurgo, Michael. **King of the Cloud Forest**. Egmont, 2006. ISBN: 978-1405226684 Paperback

Genre: Fantasy

Honours: 1993 Prix Sorciere (France)

Set during the Second World War, this is a story of a young boy in China, who travels with his Uncle across the Himalayas to escape Japanese attack. When separated from his loving uncle, Ashley is rescued by mythical, mysterious red-haired giants, better known as the Yeti. Ashley must courageously choose between moving towards an uncertain future or remaining behind with the Yeti.

Nimmo, Jenny. **Midnight for Charlie Bone**. Egmont, 2006. ISBN: 978-1405225434 Paperback

Genre: Fantasy

Charlie's magical talent finally manifests itself and he is sent to Bloor's Academy, a brooding school reminiscent of Hogwarts. Charlie is quickly embroiled in many adventures where the lines between the good guys and the bad are well delineated. Charlie is a likeable, if reluctant, hero and this imaginative fantasy series will appeal to children not quite ready for Harry Potter and for fans looking for Harry readalikes. This is the first book in the multi-volume Children of the Red King series.

Patron, Susan. **The Higher Power of Lucky**. Aladdin, 2008. ISBN: 978-1416975571 paperback

Genre: Realistic fiction

Honours: Newbery Medal, 2007

Lucky is terrified that her guardian Bridgett will go home to France, leaving her in an orphanage far away from her home and friends in Hard Pan, California (population 43). Lucky likes to eavesdrop on self-help meetings and wonders how she can find her Higher Power, something she believes will give her control over her life. Finally convinced that Bridgett is indeed leaving, Lucky decides to run away. This is the rock bottom that finally allows Lucky to deal with her unresolved grief over her mother's death and loosens the knot of insecurity that has kept her tied up for so long. A heart-wrenching story about love and belonging.

Pearce, Philippa. **The Little Gentleman**. Puffin, 2005. ISBN: 978-0141318394 Paperback

Genre: Fantasy

Honours: The Cilip Carnegie Medal Nomination

This is a tale about the friendship between a little girl Bet and the “little gentleman”, a talking mole who is more than 300 years old. Bet realizes that the mole has been bewitched and is immortal. His dearest wish is to become mortal again but if Bet helps him, she will lose her dear friend because he will lose his magical ability to speak and think like a human.

Pearson, Kit. **A Perfect Gentle Knight**. Puffin, 2007. ISBN: 978-0670066827 Paperback

Genre: Realistic fiction

Eleven-year-old Corrie struggles to keep her family together after the death of her mother. Corrie is not quite ready to let go of her childhood and worries about attending junior high in the fall. She also worries about her older brother who has become too entrenched in their childhood game of Knights of the Round Table and whose mental health is deteriorating. She is torn between her loyalties to her family, including her neglectful father, and to her new friend Meredith. This is a well written story with mature themes that is set in the 1950's.

Rowling, J. K. **Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone**. Raincoast, 2000. ISBN: 978-1551923987 Paperback

Genre: Fantasy

Honours: Nestlé Smarties Book Prize; British Children's Book of the Year Award; British Children's Book of the Year Award.

This is the first book of the remarkable series that introduces us to Hogwarts, a school of wizardry and secrets. Harry is a famous young wizard who takes on the fearsome Dark Lord Voldemort, the murderer of Harry's parents. He must contend with the world of the Muggles (the world of ordinary people) between terms at Hogwarts where Harry and his friends, Ron and Hermione, regularly battle the forces of evil. This series introduces readers to a wide variety of characters as Harry progresses through his formal schooling to become a fully accredited wizard and as he attempts to vanquish his arch enemy, Voldemort. This first book is followed by **Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets** and **Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban**,

Tolan, Stephanie S. **Surviving the Applewhites**. Harper Collins, 2003. ISBN:978-0064410441 Paperback

Genre: Realistic fiction

Honours: Newbery Honor Book, 2003

The Creative Academy, a home school run by the eccentric Applewhite family, is Jake's last chance before being sent to juvenile hall. The Applewhites are all famous artists; all except for neat, well-organized E.D. who worries that she does not seem to fit into her own family. Jake's attention-seeking appearance and behaviour fail to impact this bizarre group and he suddenly finds himself with the responsibility for his own education and for the youngest Applewhite. In this hilarious story, Jake and E.D. learn a lot about who they are and discover talents they never realized they had.

Wiles, Deborah. **Love, Ruby Lavender**. Harcourt, 2005. ISBN: 978-0152054786 Paperback

Genre: Historical fiction

This funny, feel-good story follows the exploits of feisty, nine-year-old Ruby Lavender and her eccentric grandmother in Halleluia, Mississippi. Ruby and her grandmother not only see each other daily but also regularly exchange correspondence through a secret mailbox; a knothole in a tree. When her grandmother leaves to spend the summer in Hawaii and welcome a new grandchild, Ruby is devastated. Bereft, Ruby helps with the local theatre production, cares for rescued chickens and deals with the irritating Melba Jane. She corresponds with her grandmother through regular mail, but because of the time lag, she must learn to make decisions on her own.

Wynne-Jones, Tim. **Rex Zero and the End of the World**. Farrar Straus Giroux, 2007. ISBN: 978-0374334673 Hardcover

Genre: Historical fiction

Honours: Boston Globe/BHorn Book Award Honor Book

In the summer of 1962, Rex is trying to adjust to his new home in Ottawa and make some friends before starting Grade 6. The backdrop of the Cold War is pervasive as the children are obsessed with backyard bomb shelters and worried about fallout from Hiroshima and the nuclear threat. Filled with quirky characters and a strong sense of cultural history, this is a story about fitting in and finding one's place. Followed by the sequels: **Rex Zero, King of Nothing** (c2008) and **Rex Zero the Great Pretender** (c2009).

Appelt, Kathi. **The Underneath**. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2008. ISBN: 978-1-4169-5058-5 Hardcover

Genre: Animal Fantasy

The Underneath relates an emotionally charged story about Ranger, an old hunting dog, and the kittens for which he cares. Ranger's evil owner, Gar Face, has already drowned the cat mother and attempted to drown her kitten, Puck, Sabine's brother. Separated from his sister and Ranger, the story's focus is upon his efforts to return home. Intertwined with this story, is another story about Grandmother Moccasin, an ancient shape shifting snake, who is facing the loss of her beloved daughter by seeking revenge. This book depicts loss and change for the elementary reader in a magical and hopeful manner.

