

Nonfiction Literature

Compiled by Kris Dinnison and Peggy Johnsen

Summer 2004

Chan, Arlene *Awakening the Dragon (The Dragon Boat Festival)*

Illus: Song Nan Zhang (Tundra Books, 2004) ISBN 0-88776-656-0

This nonfiction book is divided into brief chapters on the history, practice, preparation for Dragon Boat races, which still go on today. The illustrations are excellent and the connection from ancient history to current day practice makes this a fascinating read.

Krull, Kathleen. *A is for Music*. (Harcourt, 2003) ISBN 0-15-201438-1.

Wonderful presentation of alphabet of musical terms, artists, instruments through rich illustrations by Stacy Innerst.

Rappaport, Doreen *Free At Last: Stories and Songs of Emancipation*

Illus: Shane W. Evans (Candlewick Press, 2004) ISBN 076361440-8

This is an amazing collection based on true stories of America from Emancipation to Brown V Board of Education. The illustrations are striking, and the songs and stories don't sugar coat the reality of segregation and discrimination.

Hoobler, Dorothy and Thomas *We Are Americans Voices of the Immigrant Experience*

(Scholastic, 2003) ISBN 0-439-16297-1

A wonderful historical text based on and including the words of immigrants from the first Americans who came during the ice age to current day immigrant families. Photos, diaries, letters, oral histories, and biographies all help tell the story of every type of immigrant American has seen.

Florian, Douglas *Bow Wow Meow Meow* (Harcourt, 2003) ISBN 00152163956

The man who brought you Insectopedia and Mamalobilia, brings you some wonderful poems about cats and dogs.

Hopkinson, Deborah *Shutting out the Sky Life in the Tenements of New York 1880-1924*

(Orchard Books, 2003) ISBN 0-439-37590-8

This is a well-researched book that traces the stories of five young immigrants in New York City at the turn of the century. Informational text is mixed with the individual stories and wonderful photographs to create a unique picture of life in New York's tenements.

Arenstam, Peter et. al. *Mayflower 1620 A New Look at a Pilgrim Voyage*

Illus: Sisse Brimberg and Cotton Coulson (National Geographic Press, 2003)

ISBN 0-7922-6142-9

The mythology around the Pilgrims and the Mayflower is thick and idealized. This book takes a new look at the facts and portrays the experience that the new colonists really had. This includes what it was like on ship, why they really came, and what life

was like once they reached landfall. A great new addition to any study of US history, and a great companion to PBS' "Colonial House" series.

Davidson, Celeste *The Queen's Progress: An Elizabethan Alphabet*

Illus: Mannis Bagram Ibatouline (Viking, 2003) ISBN 0-670-03612-9

An informative alphabet book which traces Queen Elizabeth's yearly journey through her kingdom. Each letter stands for some piece of Elizabethan life, and then additional text gives even more context for that item. The illustrations are rich in period detail as well.

Tang, Greg. *Math Fables, Lessons That Count*. (Scholastic, 2004) ISBN 0439453992.

This is the sixth book in a series that includes, *Grapes of Math, Math For all Seasons, The Best of Times, Math Appeal, and Math-terpieces*, Tang cleverly presents the different representations of numbers 1-10. Combines love of language and math learning.

Hopkins, Lee Bennett, ed. *Wonderful Words, Poems about Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening*. (Simon and Schuster, 2004) ISBN 0689835884.

This is a glorious collection celebrating words in speech, reading, language, and drama and how they influence our lives.

Pattison, Darcy. *The Journey of Oliver K. Woodman*. (Harcourt, 2003)

ISBN 0152023291.

Oliver K. Woodman, a man made of wood, takes a remarkable journey across America, as told through the postcards and letters of those he meets along the way. Clever geography of United States.

Noda, Takayo. *Dear World*. (Dial, 2003) ISBN 0803726449.

This is told as a child's poetic notes to the earth and its inhabitants, and illustrated with cut-paper collages.

Lewis, J. Patrick. *Scien-Trickery, Riddles in Science*. (Harcourt, 2004)

ISBN 0152166815.

A collection of poems that describes people, places, and things associated with science, including oxygen, the ocean, and germs. Told as riddles.

Brenner, Barbara. *One Small Place by the Sea*. (HarperCollins, 2004)

ISBN 0688171826.

For one afternoon, a child visitor observes the cycle of change within a tide pool, a small place at the edge of the sea.

Gibbons, Gail *Mummies, Pyramids, and Pharaohs* (Little Brown, 2004) ISBN 0316309281

This is another of Gibbons' informative and interesting books. It looks at a wide range of ancient Egyptian life with illustrations that support and add to the text.

Jenkins, Steve *Actual Size* (Houghton Mifflin, 2004) ISBN 0618375945

Paper cut collages created in the actual size of the animals and portions of animals Jenkins describe to us create big impact for readers. Whether looking at the tiny pygmy shrew, a goliath beetle, or the eye of a giant squid, readers can get some perspective on how these animals compare to us.

Talbott, Hudson. *Safari Journal*. (Harcourt, 2003) ISBN 015216393X.

Twelve-year-old Carey is unhappy about being sent on a trip to Kenya with his wacky Aunt Elaine, until he encounters fascinating customs, endangered animals, and wild adventures. This is based on the author's travels in Kenya, but the characters are all creations of the author's imagination.

Anno. *Anno's Spain*. (Philomel Books, 2003) ISBN 0399242384.

This wordless journey book depicts the enchanting cities and historical eras of this intriguing country of Spain.

Melmed, Laura Krauss. *Captial! Washington D.C. from A to Z*. (HarperCollins, 2003) ISBN 0688175619.

Rhyming text and illustrations present the sights of Washington, D.C., using the structure of the alphabet. Full of information, using text and illustrations.

Chigna, Charles. *Animal Tracks, Wild Poems to Read Aloud*. (Harry N. Abrams, 2004) ISBN 2003014053.

A collection of simple poems about such animals as lions, humming birds, dogs, alligators, and seagulls. Lines and luminous watercolor washes bring out the high spirits and idiosyncrasies of the creatures in this collection of poems.

Westberg Peters, Lisa *Earthshake Poems from the ground up* Illus: Cathie Felstead (Greenwillow, 2003) ISBN 0-06-029265-2

A wonderful book of poems about geology with great and informative illustrations. Glaciers and streambeds were never so much fun!

Smith Jr., Charles R. *I Am America* (Scholastic, 2003) ISBN 0-439-43179-4

Delightful photographs of very diverse children and a rhythmic, rhyming text about how all our differences add up to America

Ehlert, Lois *Pie in the Sky* (Harcourt, 2004) ISBN 0-15-216584-3

This charming book has a child narrating the changes that occur on a tree outside her house. Her dad calls it a pie tree. All year she notes her observations of all the things she sees, but she never sees any pie. Finally the tree bears fruit and the mystery is solved. Great illustrations and it includes a recipe for cherry pie.

Dowson, Nick *Tigress* Illus: Jane Chapman (Candlewick, 2004) ISBN 0-7636-2325-3

Wonderful language in this book describes the behavior of a tigress caring for her cubs as they grow and learn how to live on their own. Smaller text accompanies the main text and gives further details about the habits of tigers.

Jenkins, Steve & Robin Page *What Do You Do With A Tail Like This?*
(Houghton Mifflin, 2003) ISBN 0618256288

Each body part is posed with a question: What do you do with a tail (foot, mouth, ears) like this? Then each animal's unique ability is explained on the following page. cut paper collage illustrations of animal parts and then the animals themselves. The pattern is simple, but it gives a lot of good information within that pattern and at the end there is a section with even more details about each of the animals they mentioned

Bang, Molly *My Light* (Blue Sky Press, 2004) ISBN 043948961X

In this wonderful, energetic text, Bang speaks in the voice of the sun, who explains all the ways in which his light is used to create energy for people on earth. Includes additional information on topics like photosynthesis, fossil fuels, and dams in the back. wildly energetic, colorful illustrations with lots of movement

Tyson, Leigh Ann *An Interview With Harry the Tarantula* Illus: Henrik Drescher
(National Geographic, 2003) ISBN 0792251229

Katy Did is interviewing Harry the Tarantula on KBUG radio. The format is humorous, but as Harry tells the story of being captured by a little girl, he includes many interesting facts about being a tarantula. Includes a two page fact sheet at the end and cartoonish, humorous drawings with lots of accurate detail about the tarantula.

Biography

Lasky, Katherine. *The Man Who Made Time Travel*. (Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 2003)

Once again Lasky has brought well researched material into the young readers' world. Kevin Hawkes' illustrations and Lasky's language describe the need for sailors to be able to determine their position at sea and the efforts of John Harrison, an eighteenth century man, who spent his life refining instruments to enable them to do this.

Ray, Deborah Kogan. *Hokusai, The Man Who Painted a Mountain*.
(Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 2001) ISBN 0374332630.

Hokusai produced thirty thousand works of art. He made thousands of drawings, woodblock prints, copper plate engravings, book illustrations, posters, albums, fans, paintings on paper and silk, large screens, and miniatures. He not only changed the art in Japan, but changed art in the Western world. He lived 1760-1849).

Shange, Ntozake. *Ellington was not a Street*. (Simon & Schuster, 2004) ISBN
0689828845.

Powerful, powerful reflective tribute to the African-American community of old by noted poet Shange. She recalls her childhood home and the close-knit group of innovators that often gathered there. Short bibliographies of some of the men are given in the back. Equally powerful illustrations by Nelson.

Le Tord, Bijou. *A Bird or Two*. (Eerdmans Books, 1999) ISBN 0802851843.

Simple text and bright illustrations describe the work of French painter, Henri Matisse, particularly his joyful use of color.

Anderson, M.T. *Strange Mr. Satie*. (Viking, 2003) ISBN 0670036374.

Introduces the life of the French composer, Erik Satie, who spent his entire career challenging established conventions in music. "Satie was a genius and a crank, a magician and a child, a fool and a visionary, a gentle man with a violent temper, a medieval composer on the cutting edge of modernity."

Lasky, Kathryn *A Voice of Her Own III: Paul Lee* (Candlewick, 2003) ISBN 0763602523

Phyllis Wheatley, a slave brought from Africa during the colonial times, learned to read, write, and eventually to write poetry. In spite of it being illegal for her to be educated, her poetry was celebrated.

Byrd, Robert. *Leonardo Beautiful Dreamer*. (Dutton Children's Books, 2003) ISBN 0525470336.

Illustrations and text portray the life of Leonardo da Vinci, who gained fame as an artist, through such works as the Mona Lisa, including human anatomy and flight. Lots and lots of information and visually dynamic!

Bearden, Romare. *Li'l Dan, the Drummer Boy, A Civil War Story*. (Simon & Schuster, 2003) ISBN 0689862377.

This legendary artist shared this idea for a book over two decades ago with Henry Lois Gates Jr. (W.E.B. Du Bois Professor of Humanities at Harvard) and it is now a dynamic presentation of language and art. A must for Civil War collections.

Borden, Louise *Sea Clocks, The Story of Longitude* Illus: Erik Blegvad (Simon & Schuster, 2004) ISBN 0-689-84216-3

This is a wonderfully written biography of John Harrison, an eighteenth century Englishman. At that time ships were often lost at sea because sailors could track latitude but not longitude. Harrison created a clock that could keep perfect enough time so that ships would no longer be lost at sea.

Winters, Kay *Abe Lincoln The Boy Who Loved Books* Illus: Nancy Carpenter (Simon & Schuster, 2003) ISBN 0-689-82554-4

This is a beautifully written and revealing biography of the sixteenth president's early life and formative years. The illustrations really enhance this poetic, sensitive text

Demi *Muhammad* (Simon & Schuster, 2003) ISBN 0689852649

The story of Muhammad's childhood, his many travels, and his marriage lay the groundwork for this story of the founder Islam. When he is a young adult, the angel Gabriel appears to him and gives him the first scriptures of the Koran. The story traces Islam's beginnings, how they were persecuted, and how Muhammad's unfailing faith bred tolerance of Islam among other religions. stylized paintings that use decorative papers and gold foil in collage. Muhammad is always shown as a golden silhouette

Lyon, George Ella *Mother To Tigers* Illus: Peter Catalanotto

(Atheneum, 2003) ISBN 068984221X

Helen Delaney Martini was the Bronx Zoo's first woman zookeeper and the founder of their animal nursery in 1944. She started out raising sick tiger cubs in her apartment and ended up changing the way baby animals in all zoos are cared for and raised.

Krull, Kathleen. *Harvesting Hope, The Story of Cesar Chavez*. 2003. ISBN 0-15-201437-3.

A biography of Cesar Chavez, from age 10 when he and his family lived happily on their Arizona ranch, to age 38 when he led a peaceful protest against CA migrant workers' miserable working conditions. Community Love and Belonging Choices