

Activity Guide

Children's Book Award Nominees 2007-2008



**This guide was prepared by members of the
Children's Book Award Committee**

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ABBY TAKES A STAND

Patricia McKissack

Viking, 2005

104 Pages

SUMMARY: Abby tells about a time in 1960 when she was 10 years old, living in Nashville. She participated in passing out flyers to protest segregation after she was turned away from a new restaurant because she was black.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY ...

Other books in the Scraps of Time Series

My Brother Martin by Christine King Farris

The Other Side by Jacqueline Woodson

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Social Studies: Research the history of the civil rights movement in the 1960's.

Language Arts: Create a flyer about a topic that you want others to know more about.

WEB SITES:

Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Civil Rights Movement <http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/mlk/>

Encarta: Rosa Parks http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761575590/Parks_Rosa_Louise.html

Wayback: Stand up for your Rights <http://pbskids.org/wayback/civilrights/>

BOOKTALK:

Can you imagine that you are not allowed to drink from the same water fountain as your friends because you are different? Abby experienced this. She also was not allowed to eat at a restaurant of her choice because she was black. Read this book to see what a young black girl experienced as she was growing up at a time when the South was beginning to change. See what Abby did to help make a difference in her town.

Prepared by: Janell Alston

BALLPARK

Lynn Curlee

Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2005

41 pages

SUMMARY: From short left fields to high outside walls, each ball park in America has its own unique characteristics. In *Ballpark*, Lynn Curlee takes you back in time to the history of this national pastime through the homes where it was played. She explores how the history of these “giant green cathedrals” is important but often is missed as part of baseball’s mystery.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Take Me Out to the Ballpark: An Illustrated Tour to Baseball Parks Past and Present by Josh Leventhal

Out of the Ballpark by Alex Rodriguez and Frank Morrison

Heroes of Baseball: The Men Who Made It America’s Favorite Game by Robert Lipsyte

This is Baseball by Margaret Blackstone and John O’Brien

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Language Arts:

- Baseball Almanac – Use the World Almanac for Kids [on-line almanac](#) to research facts about baseball. Create a display of facts on a poster board using round “baseball” sticky-notes.
- Assign each group of students a ballpark named in the book and have them create a research project. Use *Ballpark* as a start to their research. The students can create baseball cards to write/display their ball park facts!

Social Studies:

- Map all of the ballparks on a U.S. map that are named in the book.
- Locate and research the history of local or state ballparks.
- Create a timeline of events from the book. Using sentence strips around the room, reread *Ballpark* and chart events as they take place in the book.

Math:

- Averages – Mostly appropriate for 4th or 5th grade, this site aids students in finding the averages of batters. <http://web.buddyproject.org/web012/web012/lessonplans.html>

WEB SITES:

More Curriculum Connections Here! http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson107.shtml

World Almanac for Kids <http://worldalmanacforkids.com/explore/sports/baseball.html>

(World Almanac for Kids may also be accessed in SIRS Discoverer in [DISCUS](#).)

Learning From Baseball <http://www.teachersfirst.com/baseball.htm?CFID=230861&CFTOKEN=24291649>

Ballpark Sites: <http://www.ballparks.com/>

<http://www.ballparksofbaseball.com/FutureBallparks.htm>

BOOKTALK:

“Take me out to the ball game; take me out to the crowd.” If this familiar song moves brings back memories of games at your favorite ballpark, then this book is for you. From Wrigley Field to Fenway Park, this book tells the history of our nation’s “favorite pastime.” Before TV, before computers, and even before radio, baseball has been there to entertain the masses. This wonderful nonfiction book by Lynn Curlee hits a home run as she reviews the histories and the current phenomenon of our countries’ ball parks.

Prepared by: Jennifer Jones

BROTHERS IN HOPE: THE STORY OF THE LOST BOYS OF SUDAN

Mary Williams
Lee & Low, 2005
36 pages

SUMMARY: Eight-year-old Garang, orphaned by a civil war in Sudan, finds the inner strength to help lead other boys as they trek thousands of miles seeking safety in Ethiopia, then Kenya, and finally in the United States.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Kingdoms of Africa by Stuart Kallen

Leaving Vietnam: the Journey of Tuan Ngo, a Boat Boy by Sarah Kilborne

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Language Arts: Do research projects on Africa.

Social Studies: Use the map in the back of the book to locate various African nations; use a world map to track Garang's journey. Discuss human rights issues.

Science: Discuss malnutrition and the diseases associated with it.

Math: Calculate how many miles most of the Lost Boys traveled.

WEB SITES:

Lost Boys of Sudan <http://www.lostboysofsudan.com/>

Red Cross: Lost Boys of Sudan <http://www.redcross.org/news/in/africa/0108lostboyspage.html>

BOOKTALK:

This is the story of Garang, one of the Lost Boys of Sudan. Told in first person, Garang shares the story of the Civil War that ravaged his country. He tells how his family was killed, how he left his burning village, and how he met thousands of other orphaned children on a trek to survive. The boys, ranging in age from five to fifteen, trek across Sudan to Ethiopia. Many do not survive the trip. In Ethiopia, the boys are sent to a refugee camp and meet Tom, an American. They have food to eat and go to school. Then war grips Ethiopia, and the boys are once again forced to march to Kenya. After years of living in refugee camps, many of the boys are sent to the United States.

Gregory Christie's striking illustrations bring the story to life, without emphasizing the horrors the boys faced. Information in the "Author's Notes" and "Afterword" help explain the plight of these boys.

Prepared by: Becky Bridges

DEFIANCE

Valerie Hobbs

Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005

116p.

SUMMARY: Toby Steiner had been at Children's Hospital because he had cancer. Now that his cancer was in remission, his family has rented a house in the country for the summer. Toby meets an old woman, Pearl, and her cow, Blossom. Toby learns about freedom of choice from Pearl.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Because of Anya by Margaret Peterson Haddix

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Language Arts: Write a poem.

Science: Research cancer.

Social Studies: Research St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Math: Hold a Math-a-thon.

WEB SITES:

Valerie Hobbs. <http://www.Valeriehobbs.com>

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. <http://www.stjude.org>

Math-A-Thon. <http://www.mathathon.org>

BOOKTALK:

Toby had spent three months at the Children's Hospital in New York. His cancer was in remission. His family rented a house in the country for the summer. Toby's mother was overprotective, but Toby wanted freedom to ride a bike, fish and watch the stars. Toby rode his bike until he saw a cow in the pasture fence. The cow was nothing but skin and bones. He found the owner of the cow, a woman named Pearl who was almost blind. Toby read her mail to her and milked Blossom, the skinny cow. Toby became friends with Pearl and Blossom. Pearl was a famous poet, and she wanted Toby to read poems aloud to her. Toby had a secret he was not telling his parents. He told Pearl that he was not going back to the hospital, even though he had a small knot on his side. Pearl helped him understand the freedom of choice. Toby learned about living and dying from Blossom and Pearl.

Prepared by: Eleanor Haton

EACH LITTLE BIRD THAT SINGS

Deborah Wiles
Harcourt, 2005
247 pages

SUMMARY: Comfort Snowberger is well acquainted with death since her family runs the funeral parlor in their small southern town, but even so the ten-year-old is unprepared for the series of heart-wrenching events that begins on the first day of Easter vacation with the sudden death of her beloved great-uncle Edisto.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Love, Ruby Lavender by Deborah Wiles
Fig Pudding by Ralph Fletcher
Missing May by Cynthia Rylant

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Language Arts: Comfort writes long obituaries for the local newspaper. Have students read some of the obits from your local paper. Let each student choose one and embellish.

Social Studies: Write obituaries of famous “dead Americans.”

Science: Comfort and her cousin almost drown in a flash flood. Discuss flooding: causes, ways to avoid, etc.

Math: Collect data from tombstones in nearby cemeteries. Have students determine age at death during each decade. Graph your outcomes.

WEB SITES:

Deborah Wiles www.deborahwiles.com

FEMA Flood <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/flood/index.shtm>

Obituaries New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/obituaries/index.html>

BOOKTALK:

How many of you have ever attended a funeral? How many of you actually enjoy attending funerals? Comfort Snowberger, the main character in *Each Little Bird that Sings* by Deborah Wiles, has attended 247 funerals in her brief ten years. After all, Comfort lives at the local mortuary that her family owns. However, when death strikes her own family, Comfort finds things are not always as you expect. Her best friend, Declaration, is not acting at all like a best friend should, and Comfort gets stuck with her whiny cousin, Peach. When Peach, Comfort and her beloved dog, Dismay, get stuck together walking to the internment, something totally unexpected changes Comfort’s life.

Prepared by: Becky Bridges

ESCAPE TO WEST BERLIN

Maurine F. Dahlberg

Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2004

179 pages

SUMMARY: In the summer of 1961, Heidi Klenk turns 13 and must find courage and inner strength to face the many obstacles coming her way. Her life in East Berlin turns upside down as she deals with her shaky relationship with her best friend, the imminent arrival of a new brother or sister, the death of her grandfather, intimidation from the government and community on her father to leave his high-paying job in West Berlin, and the growing political tension which threatens to close the border with West Berlin. The final obstacle is literally a barrier which she must find a way through while facing her greatest fear in order to join her family in the West.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Escape from War by James Riordan

Escape to the Everglades by Edwina Raffa

Kaya's Escape!: a Survival Story by Janet Beeler Shaw

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Language Arts:

- Writing prompt and discussion - If you had to leave your home quickly and secretly never to return like Heidi and could only take two of your possessions what would they be and why? (Let's assume your family gets to go with you).
- Interview a family member living during the time of the Cold War. Ask them what they remember about the time and how the Cold War affected their everyday lives.

Social Studies:

- Compare maps of Germany and Eastern Europe from the time of Heidi's story to maps of present-day Europe. Discuss the impact of the Cold War on the world during the time the Berlin Wall was up.
- Use *Streamline* to find video or photos of the time when the Berlin Wall was up and when it came down.
- Divide the class in half making one side The East and one side The West. Set up a Western store and an Eastern store to show the differences between the locations both in the number and variety of items that might have been available during Heidi's time. Have groceries, clothing, etc. and enough play money to spread around each group. Give each item a price. Give the East side half the money you give to the West side. Each group must purchase enough items to feed their group; they may purchase what they wish with the leftover money. Have the two sides compare their purchases.

WEB SITES:

Berlin Wall Online <http://www.dailysoft.com/berlinwall/index.html> brief history, FAQs, timeline and photos of the Berlin Wall

The Berlin Wall <http://userpage.chemie.fu-berlin.de/BIW/wall.html> Burkhard Kiste

Newseum: Berlin Wall <http://www.newseum.org/berlinwall/> interactive website

BOOKTALK:

Heidi Klenk is worried. It's the summer of 1961 in East Berlin, Germany, and it was supposed to be great for Heidi because she was going to turn 13. But growing up means change and this summer everything begins to

change. First, her mom is expecting a baby soon. Next, the government of East Berlin is bullying border crossers—that's people who go from East Berlin to West Berlin to work because they can get paid more—and Heidi's father is a border crosser who may have to give up a job he loves or they might get thrown out of their apartment. Then, her very best friend, Petra, says she can't see her anymore until Heidi's father gets a job in East Berlin. On top of this, her parent's late night whispering leads to one of the biggest changes she'll ever face, and she'll need all the loyalty from her friend and all the courage she can get to come through safely to the other side. If you love historical fiction, you will enjoy this fast-moving story where loyalty and courage mean everything.

Prepared by: Jill Altman

ESCAPE FROM SAIGON: HOW A VIETNAM WAR ORPHAN BECAME AN AMERICAN BOY

Andrea Warren
Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2004
110 pages

SUMMARY:

Escape From Saigon: How a Vietnam War Orphan Became an American Boy, is the story of one of the orphaned children who was airlifted out of Saigon in the final, chaotic days of the Vietnam War.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Brothers in Hope: the Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan by Mary Williams

Goodbye, Vietnam by Gloria Whelan

Little Cricket by Jackie Brown

Making it Home: Real-Life Stories from Children Forced to Flee with an introduction by Beverley Naidoo

Rain Forest Girl: More than an Adoption Story by Chalise Miner

Tangled Threads: a Hmong girl's story by Pegi Deitz Shea

The Land I Lost: Adventures of a Boy in Vietnam by Quang Nhuong Huynh

Vietnam: the Boat People Search for a Home by John Isaac

Why are People Refugees? by Cath Senker

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Topics for the classroom may include:

- Adoption
- Orphans
- War
- Vietnam
- Immigration
- Adjusting to a new culture
- Human Rights

WEB SITES:

Vietnam Babylift <http://www.vietnambabylift.org/>

Kids Eyes on Asia <http://stmnftsc.melb.catholic.edu.au/kidseyes/vietnam/>

CIA World Factbook: Vietnam <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/vm.html>

Teach Vietnam <http://www.vvmf.org/index.cfm?SectionID=6>

The Fall of Saigon <http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/specials/saigon/>

Adopt Vietnam: the Legacy of Operation Babylift <http://www.adoptvietnam.org/adoption/babylift.htm>

People & Events: Operation Babylift (1975)

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/daughter/peopleevents/e_babylift.html

BOOKTALK:

http://nancykeane.com/booktalks/warren_escape.htm

Prepared by: Stephanie Nichols

THE GREATEST SKATING RACE: A WORLD WAR II STORY FROM THE NETHERLANDS

Louise Borden

Margaret K. McElderry, 2004

44 pages

SUMMARY:

The Greatest Skating Race by Louise Borden gives an exciting account of a young ten-year-old boy who uses his ice-skating skills to help two children escape to Belgium, where they will be safe from German soldiers. In a German-occupied Dutch town called Sluis, young Piet Janssen dreams of competing in the Elfstedentocht, a 200 kilometer skating race, and follows his family tradition of bravery, strength and determination to help two children escape to Belgium by skating in freezing temperature on this dangerous trip. Piet is depended upon to keep these children safe from German soldiers. This is a book of survival and courage and a must read for older children who like history, like to dream, and like an adventure.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Fantastic Journey of Pieter Bruegel by Anders Schafer

The Winter When Time Was Frozen by Els Pelgrom

Number the Stars by Lois Lowry

The Little Ships: The Heroic Rescue at Dunkirk in World War II by Louise Borden

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Science:

- Have students make a Crystal Snow Art for display for a meeting or in a public library. Things needed: Water, Containers, Q-Tips, Album, Epsom Salt, Lite Salt, Sugar, Black Construction Paper, Glossy White Paper, and White Construction Paper. What you need to do to make the Crystal Snow Art can be found at this web address: <http://www.kinderart.com/across/snow.shtml>
If this is too elementary, try this...
- Have students create a great ice skating scene on a frozen lake surrounded by snow. First, take a piece of aluminum foil and cut out a large oval shape for the iced-over pond. Place this on a piece of blue background construction paper. Add cotton ball snow with glue around the pond. Next, cut out skaters using templates, decorate them, and arrange them as you want on the pond. You have created a wonderful skating scene!

Language Arts:

- Have students select a Holocaust survivor story, and ask them to compare the greatest times he/she had in his/her country before the Holocaust. Students should give a brief biography of the Holocaust survivor and create a Holocaust memoir book of that survivor (refer to Web sites).

Social Studies:

- Give each student a map and have them locate, label, and color Netherlands—yellow, Sweden—red, Germany—blue, Norway—green, France—orange, Holland—purple, and Belgium—pink. The North and Baltic Seas should be located and labeled. Locate, label and place a star at the capital.

WEB SITES:

The History Place – Holocaust Timeline <http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/holocaust/timeline.html>

A Teacher's Guide to the Holocaust <http://fcit.usf.edu/Holocaust>

The Holocaust: A Tragic Legacy <http://library.thinkquest.org/12663>

BOOKTALK:

Have you ever lived out a dream? In this story, *The Greatest Skating Race* by Louise Borden, a young ten-year-old boy uses the admiration of a sportswriter and famous skater to secure safety for a young boy and girl. In a German-occupied Dutch town called Sluis (pronounced Sloice), young Piet Janssen follows his family tradition of bravery, strength and determination, sustains freezing temperature along the frozen canals, and outsmarts German soldiers until the three cross the Belgian border. This book of survival and courage provides pronunciations of German words that maybe unheard of by non-German speaking readers. *The Greatest Skating Race* is a must read for older children who like history, like adventure, and like to dream and perform it.

Prepared by: Shiela Martina Keaise

A HOUSE OF TAILORS

Patricia Reilly Giff

Wendy Lamb Books, 2004

148 pages

SUMMARY: Thirteen-year-old Dina immigrates to Brooklyn, New York, in 1871. She longs to return to Germany. After surviving a series of hardships with her uncle, aunt, and baby, she begins to think of Brooklyn as home.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Why German Immigrants Came to America by Lewis K. Parker

Molly's Pilgrim by Barbara Cohen

I Hate English by Ellen Levine

Meet Kirsten: An American Girl by Janet Beeler Shaw

When Jessie Came Across the Sea by Amy Hest

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS: (choose the subject areas that are applicable to your book)

Language Arts:

- Write journal entries as if you were an immigrant.
- Read stories of other immigrants and compare lifestyle with one in this book.

Social Studies:

- Study New York and Germany during the 1800's. Compare the way of life in both during the time of the book.
- Make a time line of historical events around the time of this book. (Late 1800s)
- Study about factory jobs and their working conditions.

WEB SITES:

Immigration Station <http://www.angelisland.org/immigr02.html>

Welcome to Immigration <http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/immigration/tour/index.htm>

Big Apple History <http://pbskids.org/bigapplehistory/index-flash.html>

BOOKTALK:

My name is Dina. I am sorry if my English is not clear. I have just moved here from Germany. I live with my uncle, his new wife and their baby. Our family are tailors. We make our living by sewing. I am not sure I want to stay here in America. I miss my family very much. Find out if I return to Germany or make Brooklyn my new home by reading my story, in *A House of Tailors*.

Prepared by: Theresa Harmon

HIDDEN CHILD

Isaac Millman

Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 2005

80 pages

SUMMARY:

Isaac and his parents were happy in France until the Germans invaded the country when Isaac was seven. Then his father was arrested just for being a Jew. Later his mother was sent away, too, and Isaac became one of the many children whose lives were saved by people willing to hide them. In his own words and paintings, and in family photographs, Isaac Millman shares his sad, happy, exciting, and hopeful memories of how he survived World War II.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Anne Frank by Josephine Poole

The Journey That Saved Curious George: The True Wartime Escape of Margret and H.A.Rey by Louise Borden

The Hidden Children by Howard Greenfeld

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Language Arts:

Write about a time they were lost or separated from their parents and afraid they might not find them.

Read a biography of another hidden child, and write about him or her.

Social Studies: Do research about the Holocaust, especially about the lost and hidden children.

WEB SITES:

Meet the Author: Isaac Millman www.eduplace.com/kids/tnc/mtai/millman.html

Guides for teachers and older students about children of the Holocaust:

- Hidden Children. Children of the Holocaust Discussion Guide
www.adl.org/children_holocaust/about_hidden.asp
- A Teacher's Guide to the Holocaust www.fcit.usf.edu/Holocaust/people/children.htm

BOOKTALK:

Isaac Millman was only seven when the Germans invaded France, but his happy life changed forever. He could no longer play in the park or go to the movies because no Jews were allowed. Then his father was arrested and sent away, just for being Jewish. He and his mother were caught trying to escape to the countryside and sent to prison. But his mother bribed a guard to set him free. This began Isaac's many years of living as a hidden child. With the help of many people, Isaac survived World War II living in different places, including a hospital, an apartment, and a house near a farm. After the war, Isaac came to live in the United States. His story, photographs, and paintings are sad, happy, and exciting, but always hopeful.

Prepared by: Lois Rauch Gibson

LOWJI DISCOVERS AMERICA

Candace Fleming

Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2005

152 pages

SUMMARY: Lowji Sanjana, a 9-year-old boy moves with his family from Bombay, India to small suburban Hamlet, Illinois.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Coming to America: The Story of Immigration by Betsy Maestro

Watch the Stars Come Out by Riki Levinson

An Ellis Island Christmas by Maxinne Rhea Leighton

I Hate English! by Ellen Levine

The Keeping Quilt by Patricia Polacco

When Jessie Came Across the Sea by Amy Hest

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Language Arts:

- Do an author study of Candace Fleming and other books she has written. Her webpage is found at <http://www.candacefleming.com>.
- Set up an opportunity to pen pal or epal a class from another country. Discuss letter writing.
- Make a dictionary of American slang words.
- Write a persuasive paper highlighting why someone would want to move to your town from another country.

Social Studies:

- Study and compare the two cities, Bombay, India, and Hamlet, Illinois. Make a travel brochure for one of the two.
- Study immigration. Read other books about people's experiences.
- Study Indian customs, traditions, foods, etc.

Science/Health:

- Study and compare the climate, weather, landforms, etc. of the two places.
- Discuss moving and loneliness. Create a list of activities to help someone who is new to an area.
- Discuss ways we can help people new to our area.

WEB SITES:

Candace Fleming <http://www.candacefleming.com>

India – National Geographic http://www3.nationalgeographic.com/places/countries/country_india.html

SIRS Discoverer, a DISCUS database, has information on immigration and India.

BOOKTALK:

Raise your hand if you have ever moved. How did you feel? Were you lonely? Did you miss your friends? Was it easy to make new friends? Well, Lowji knows how you feel as he discovers America. Lowji makes a big move from Bombay, India, to Hamlet, Illinois. Read about how Lowji adjusts to his new life *in Lowji Discovers America*.

Prepared by: Theresa Harmon

THE MISSING MANATEE

Cynthia DeFelice

Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005

181 pages

SUMMARY: While dealing with his parents' separation, eleven-year-old Skeet spends most of Spring Break in his skiff on a Florida river, where he finds a manatee shot to death. He is shocked when he discovers who the killer is and how it happened.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Touching the Waves by Ben Baglio

Dudley, a Florida Manatee by Bonnie Highsmith Taylor

My Brother's Hero by Adrian Fogelin

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Language Arts: Have students research the endangered Florida manatee and write a short paper explaining why it is endangered.

Social Studies: Ask students to locate Florida on a map, as well as the Cassacoochie River and the Gulf of Mexico. How is the climate different for a student living on the Gulf Coast of Florida than it is for us?

Math: Looking at a map of Florida, calculate the distance between your home and a city on the Gulf Coast of Florida.

WEB SITES:

Save the Manatee Club <http://www.savethemanatee.org> – saving the Florida manatee

Cynthia DeFelice <http://www.cynthiadefelice.com> –about the author

Tarpon Fishing <http://www.gianttarpon.com/tarpon.htm> - all about tarpon fishing

BOOKTALK:

It's a beautiful spring day in Florida, and the first day of spring break, too! The break isn't as much fun as Skeet thought it would be. First, he learns his parents are getting a divorce. Then, he goes fishing and spots a dead manatee among the mangroves just where the Cassacoochie River opens out into the Gulf of Mexico. When he brings back the sheriff to show him the dead carcass of the manatee, it's gone! Plus, his teacher had already assigned an essay to be done over the two week spring break, pretty much ruining his greatly anticipated free time. All Skeet wants is to hook a tarpon on a fly rod in the company of the local tarpon-fishing hero-Dirty Dan, the Tarpon Man. But the joy of landing a prize tarpon is dashed when he discovers the dead manatee once again and recognizes the rope and tennis ball he finds nearby. Choices and difficult decisions must be made because he believes his hero to be guilty of the manatee's death. This is a novel about a young boy's love of nature, about growing up, and about accepting more responsibility during the growing-up process.

Prepared by: Leslie Hall

THE OLD WILLIS PLACE: A GHOST STORY

Mary Downing Hahn

Clarion Books, 2004

199 pages

SUMMARY: Twelve-year-old Diana tries to befriend the daughter of the new caretaker, despite her brother's warnings to stay away. Diane's actions cause a series of events that release the spirit of a woman who once cruelly ruled over the Willis house.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Ghost Brother by C. S. Adler

Haunted Summer by Betty Ren Wright

Ghost Soldier by Elaine Marie Alphin

The Ghost of Cutler Creek by Cynthia DeFelice

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Language Arts: As Diana, write letters to Lissa. Try to persuade Lissa to become your friend.

Social Studies: Compare and contrast the differences in daily life during Diana's and Lissa's lifetimes.

Science: The Willis place was near a pond and forest. List the different animals that would be found in each of those habitats.

WEB SITES:

American Folklore <http://www.americanfolklore.net/>

Ghostchasers across the Carolinas <http://www8.chatham.k12.nc.us/project/ghostchasers/>

Mary Downing Hahn <http://www.childrensbookguild.org/hahn.html>

BOOKTALK:

Diana is a twelve-year-old girl, yearning for friendship with a girl her own age. She only has her younger brother for companionship, so she is lonely. One day, Diana watches from the shadows of the woods on the grounds of the old Willis place. She sees yet another caretaker moving into the caretaker's house. There have been so many who have moved in and out, so this is no big deal. But Diana's interest peaks as she sees that this caretaker has a daughter near her own age. Perhaps this girl can be Diana's friend! But Diana has been given a strict set of rules by which she must abide. She knows where she can and can't go, and she knows that she cannot speak to or even show herself to anyone new. The consequences can be severe if she disobeys these rules. Is it worth the risk to Diana and her brother? Can she dare break the rules and become friends with this new girl? Find out what happens when you read *The Old Willis Place* by Mary Downing Hahn.

Prepared by: Deborah Wolfe

ONLY EMMA

Sally Warner

Viking, 2005

115 pages

SUMMARY:

Eight-year-old Emma McGraw is adjusting to a new home and a new school. She likes her family as it is, just Emma and her mom. Things are going smoothly until her mother is asked to care for four-year-old Anthony Scarpetto, who moves in with them for a week. Although Emma considers him a “pain in the patootie,” she discovers that having Anthony around is not all bad.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Not-So-Weird Emma by Sally Warner

Super Emma by Sally Warner

Each Little Bird That Sings by Deborah Wiles

Taking Care of Trouble by Bonnie B. Graves

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Language Arts:

- Create a T-chart comparing Emma’s feelings about Anthony at the beginning and at the end of the book. Explain how and why her feelings changed.
- Would you like to have a friend like Emma? What traits does Emma have that make her a good friend? Explain your answer using examples from the book.

Language Arts/Art: Emma is upset when her mother tells her that Anthony will be staying for a week. Write a want ad and/or create a poster that Emma might use to sell Anthony.

WEB SITES:

Official Website of Sally Warner <http://www.sallywarner.com>

Sally Warner <http://www.kidsreads.com/authors/au-warner-sally.asp>

BOOKTALK:

“Anthony Scarpetto saw me reaching for that puzzle piece, but he grabbed it first. And he doesn’t even know where it goes. “Give it,” I say to him, but he does not let me have it.

“You’re not the boss of me, Emma McGraw,” he says, but that’s not true. He is only four, and I am eight, which is twice as much. Of course I am the boss.

Besides, we’re at my house. You are always the boss—of other kids, anyway—when you are at your own house. That’s the rule....

Until now.”

Anthony’s parents are going out of town, and he is staying with my mom and me for a whole week. I can’t believe it! Mom expects me to play with him and help take care of him. And guess whose room he is staying in! I’m trying to make friends at my new school, but how can I invite anyone over to my house with Anthony here? He is such a pain in the patootie! It’s not fair!

I like being the only child. What will happen with a little kid in the house, and not *Only Emma*?

Prepared by: Debbie Henson

THE PENDERWICKS:
A SUMMER TALE OF FOUR SISTERS, TWO RABBITS, AND A VERY INTERESTING BOY

Jeanne Birdsall
Alfred A. Knopf, 2005
272 pages

SUMMARY:

It's summer, and school is out when the Penderwicks are on their way to a cottage in the Berkshire Mountains. Can you imagine four sisters, a widowed dad, and a dog in one vehicle on the way to a summer vacation? Rosalind, the oldest girl is 12, Skye is 11, Jane is 10, and Batty is 4.

After the family arrives at the Arundel Estate where the cottage is located, they meet Mrs. Tifton, the owner of the estate. She has a hard heart, but her son, Jeffrey, will become their close friend. The Penderwicks have many fun adventures with Jeffrey, including helping Jeffrey hide so that he won't have to be shipped off by his mother to military school. This is one summer the Penderwick girls will never forget.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Criss Cross by Lynne Ray Perkins
Each Little Bird That Sings by Deborah Wiles
Whittington by Alan Armstrong

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Guidance: This book could lead to discussions about relationships with family members and friends.

Language Arts: Compare and contrast the four Penderwick sisters' characters and personalities.

Social Studies: Research the Berkshire Mountains where the story takes place.

WEB SITE:

Jeanne Birdsall www.jeannebirdsall.com

BOOKTALK:

“‘It’s Batty’s fault,’ said Skye. ‘It is not,’ said Batty. ‘Of course it is,’ said Skye. ‘We wouldn’t be lost if Hound hadn’t eaten the map, and Hound wouldn’t have eaten the map if you hadn’t hidden your sandwich in it.’”

This is how the summer vacation begins for the Penderwick family. There is a widowed dad with four young girls named Rosalind, Skye, Jane, and Batty, and even their crazy dog, Hound, who have set off on a summer vacation.

After reaching their destination in the Berkshire Mountains, the Penderwicks meet a young boy named Jeffrey who becomes their close friend. They have some wonderful, funny, and dangerous adventures during their vacation. But there is only one problem—Jeffrey’s mother wants to send him off to military school. How will their plan be successful? Read *The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy* to find out what happens.

Prepared by: Marley Shaver

ROSA
Nikki Giovanni
Henry Holt, 2005
Unpaged

SUMMARY:

Poet Nikki Giovanni gives a vivid and detailed account of the mother of the Civil Rights Movement. Rosa accurately shows the strength of Rosa Louise Parks, a seamstress turned civil rights activist. This biographical interpretation of Rosa Parks' personal story shows the resolve of a woman who had the courage and prominence to stand against a Montgomery bus system that had prejudices against its African American riders. When Rosa refused to give up her seat on the Cleveland Avenue bus on December 1, 1955, to a white passenger, it led to one of the largest and most successful mass movements against racial segregation—the 382 day bus boycott. This book exposes readers to Collier's real-life watercolor and collage illustrations that bring to life the pivotal start of a movement in the history of the American Civil Rights Movement sparked by Rosa.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

The Story of Ruby Bridges by Robert Cole

If a Bus Could Talk: The Story of Rosa Parks by Faith Ringgold

Through My Eyes by Ruby Bridges

The School Is Not White: A True Story of the Civil Rights Movement by Doreen Rappaport

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Mathematics:

- Create a survey that will show that everyone has prejudices. Have each student survey 10 to 20 of their friends, family, or strangers. Then, have them create a tally sheet, result sheet, and a graph showing the results of the different kinds of prejudices that people have. Use the following website to help create a questionnaire on different types of prejudices and to give insight on this math project.
<http://www.understandingprejudice.org/iat/racframe.htm>
- For fun, using dates from the Rosa Parks resources have students calculate Mrs. Parks' age at the different significant events in her life.

Language Arts: Create a list of U.S. civil rights leaders using <http://pbskids.org/wayback/civilrights/>. Have students use magazines, newspapers, and other resources to locate images of the person and make a souvenir scrapbook of the person's life.

Social Studies: Select additional books about the Civil Rights Movement in America for students. Subject terms for a library catalog search include "African Americans – Civil Rights" or "Civil Rights Movements." Students can identify and discuss concepts, including the main character, how he/she achieved rights, what rights were taken from him/her, and how they would feel if those rights were taken from them.

WEB SITES:

Rosa & Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development <http://www.rosaparks.org/>

Putting the Movement Back into Civil Rights Teaching <http://www.civilrightsteaching.org>

Voices of Civil Rights <http://www.voicesofcivilrights.org/>

Time 100: Rosa Parks <http://www.time.com/time/time100/heroes/profile/parks01.html>

Rosa Parks Biography - Academy of Achievement <http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/par0bio-1>

Girl Power! Guest Rosa Parks <http://www.girlpower.gov/girlarea/gpguests/RosaParks.htm>

BOOKTALK:

Imagine being home schooled until age eleven. Imagine being under Jim Crow laws where black and white people were segregated in virtually every aspect of daily life, including public transportation. Imagine getting married to man who encourages you to finish your high school studies, when less than 7% of your race had a

high school diploma. Imagine joining the Montgomery chapter of the NAACP comprised of only men and being elected as volunteer secretary. Imagine being a rider in a bus system comprised of 75% of your race, yet being treated unfairly. Imagine being 42 years old and tired of giving in to the injustice and wrong treatment. Imagine being arrested, charged, and fined for disorderly conduct and violating a local ordinance when you were not guilty. If you can visualize all of these things, then you can envision the life of Rosa Parks. Read this book, Rosa, and you will witness first hand how Rosa survived her case against the city of Montgomery and its segregation laws.

Prepared by: Shiela Martina Keaise

SHOW WAY

Jacqueline Woodson
G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2005
42 pages

SUMMARY:

Quilting provides the vehicle for sharing with a young child her family history.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

The Josefina Story Quilt by Eleanor Coerr

The Patchwork Quilt by Valerie Flournoy

Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt by Deborah Hopkinson

The Keeping Quilt by Patricia Polacco

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Language Arts:

- Ask an older volunteer to bring a family picture album to share with the class. Later, ask the students to write a thank-you note to the volunteer for sharing his/her family history.
- Write a family recipe and provide instructions for preparing the food.

Social Studies: Write a family story by interviewing a relative. Relate their story to the time period and world events.

Guidance: Create a Class Friendship Quilt. Each student draws another student's name from a container. The student illustrates that student on a quilt patch (paper or cloth) by drawing them in the center and using the edges to show something about that person (a favorite activity, talent, etc.) Mount and display the quilt patches for all to see.

Math: Set up a symmetry center with square laminated cards with half of a symmetrical quilt design. Provide pattern blocks to replicate the pattern.

Art: Use this book as an introduction to traditional art forms.

WEB SITES:

Jacqueline Woodson www.jacquelinewoodson.com

African-American Quilting: Historical www.quiltethnic.com/historical.html

Quilt History for Teachers www.womenfolk.com/historyofquilts/lesson_plans.htm

BOOKTALK:

"Loved that baby up so. Yes, she loved that baby up." Woodson uses this refrain to share with her child a family story of seven generations of creative women. "Show Ways" are quilts that used a secret communication system to provide a map to freedom during slavery. Sewing is used throughout the book to connect this family's courageous past and present.

Prepared by: Debbie Sessions

STUMPTOWN KID

Carol Gorman and Ron J. Findley

Peachtree Publishers, 2005

224 pages

SUMMARY:

In a small Iowa town in 1952, eleven-year-old Charlie Nebraska, whose father died in the Korean War, learns the meaning of both racism and heroism when he befriends Luther Peale, a young man who once played for the old Negro Baseball League.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY ...

Crossing Jordan by Adrian Fogelin

Dad, Jackie, and Me by Myron Uhlberg

Sometimey Friend by Pansie Hart Flood

Stealing Home by Ellen Schwartz

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Many good curriculum ties may be found at Education World's [Take Them Out to the Ballgame](#), such as having students prepare a report about baseball-related events during an assigned time period (writing and social studies); figuring averages (math); setting players future salaries based on their stats and importance to the team (math); creating a stamp for a famous Negro League player (art); comparing a timeline of civil rights events with the history of integration of major sports (history); and exploring gravity, wind resistance, reaction time, and other scientific factors which affect the speed and trajectory of a hit baseball (science). The book may also be used to explore the following topics:

- Discussions of death and finality
- Friendships with people who are different
- Discussion of racism and why things changed in the '50s
- Black History Month

WEB SITES:

Education World Take Them Out to the Ballgame: http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson107.shtml

Negro League Baseball <http://www.negroleaguebaseball.com/>

Negro League Legacy at MLB.com http://mlb.mlb.com/NASApp/mlb/mlb/history/mlb_negro_leagues.jsp

Civil Rights Law and History <http://www.usdoj.gov/kidspage/crt/crtmenu.htm>

This site discusses federal civil rights laws and gives examples from history that led to their passage.

Turbulent Times: Civil Rights Movement <http://library.thinkquest.org/C004391F/>

Free At Last: The Civil Rights Movement in the United States <http://library.thinkquest.org/J0112391/>

Stamp on Black History <http://library.thinkquest.org/10320/Stamps.htm>

BOOKTALK:

http://nancykeane.com/booktalks/gorman_stumptown.htm

Prepared by: Stephanie Nichols

TACKLING DAD

Elizabeth Levy

HarperCollins Publishers, 2005

134 pages

SUMMARY:

Football is in Cassie's blood, thanks to her Dad, a star running back all through middle school, high school and college. When Cassie and her Dad hung out it was all football. Then her mom and dad split up, and her dad stopped coming to her games. Now he's remarried, Cassie has left football, but she runs track. When the football coach opens team tryouts to girls, Cassie and her friend Molly make the cut. Cassie soon finds out that middle school football is nothing like Peewee football.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

My Life as a Fifth Grade Comedian by Elizabeth Levy

Some Kind of Pride by Marie Teste

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Language Arts:

- Write a persuasive paragraph about girls playing a sport that historically has been male only.
- Write a biography about a famous female athlete.

Math: Research and compare the salaries of male and female athletes.

Guidance: This is a great book for students dealing with divorce, especially for girls who like sports.

WEB SITES:

Elizabeth Levy's official homepage <http://www.elizabethlevy.com/index.html>

Virtual Library of Sport <http://sportsvl.com/> select American Football

It's Not Your Fault <http://www.itsnotyourfault.org/> practical info for children, young people, and parents going through a family break-up

BOOKTALK:

Cassie loves football. She was the star of her Peewee team. Her Dad was the star running back in this small town not far from Buffalo, New York. But things have changed. Cassie's parents divorced, and her Dad has remarried. Cassie runs track in middle school, but her old football coach suggests that she and her friend Molly try out for the football team. Will she make the team? Will her parents sign the consent form? Can she prove to her teammates that a girl can be a running back?

Prepared by: Karen Bennett Waterfield

WHEN RATBOY LIVED NEXT DOOR

Chris Woodworth

Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2005

192 pages

SUMMARY:

Initially, Willis and his pet raccoon cause Lydia Carson no end of trouble when his family moves in next door, but as Lydia works to make amends to Willis's older brother, Elliot, and to work through problems with her mother Willis becomes an unexpected ally.

IF YOU LIKED THIS BOOK, TRY...

Georgie's Moon by Chris Woodworth

The Breaker Boys by Pat Hughes

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

Language Arts: figurative language, compare/contrast, letter writing, character study

Social Studies: 1960s language

Guidance: empathy, bullying

Careers: career exploration

Nutrition: menu planning

Note: *When Ratboy Lived Next Door* [worksheets](#) support above topics.

WEB SITES:

Chris Woodworth <http://www.chriswoodworth.com/> Author Website

When Ratboy Lived Next Door Worksheets <http://chriswoodworth.com/WhenRatboyLivedNextDoor.pdf>

Prepared by Sara Pycke, these worksheets support curriculum connections.

Dealing with Bullies <http://www.kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/bullies.html>

Beat the Bully Game http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/games/bullies_flash.html

It's My Life <http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/video/index.html> Video of children speaking about bullies

Stop Bullying Now <http://stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/index.asp?area=main>

Flash Back to the 1960's <http://library.thinkquest.org/04oct/02012/> ThinkQuest about the 1960s

DISCUS <http://www.scdiscus.org/school.html> Grolier Online, SIRS Discover, Kids InfoBits -- Search for information about raccoons

BOOKTALK:

Lydia has problems, lots of problems. She has family problems. Her mother and grandmother are not getting along. She has animal problems. Her next door neighbor Willis's raccoon attacks her. She has neighbor problems. Lydia names Willis "Ratboy" because he is so obnoxious. She has friend problems. Lydia manages to turn off the very handsome, Elliot, when she is rude to Willis. Willis just happens to be Elliot's little brother. Lydia knows that if she wants to be friends with Elliot she needs to make nice to Willis, but this won't be easy. To make things even more difficult, it seems that both her neighbors and her mother have been keeping some pretty serious secrets. Secrets that threaten to tear apart two families forever.

Prepared by: Greta Flinn