EXPLANATION OF CODE SYMBOLS USED
WITH ANNOTATIONS

R  Recommended

Ad  Additional book of acceptable quality for collections needing more material
in the area.

M  Marginal book that is so slight in content or has so many weaknesses in style
or format that it should be given careful consideration before purchase.

NR  Not recommended.

SpC  Subject matter or treatment will tend to limit the book to specialized collec-
tions.

SpR  A book that will have appeal for the unusual reader only. Recommended
for the special few who will read it.

Except for pre-school years, reading range is given for grade rather than for
age of child.

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PRINTED IN U.S.A.
New Titles for Children and Young People


Winner of the 1972 Carnegie Medal, *Watership Down* is a monumental book in every sense, including that of sheer bulk, but readers who are captivated by this fresh and vital fantasy will end their reading reluctantly. Adams has created a whole entity, a fantasy world as convincing as Middle Earth or Wonderland. There are stories—legends told within the book—that are pages long and do halt the action, but they add, on the other hand, to the authenticity of an adventure tale about rabbits that has overtones of social comment, distinctive characterization, an intricate but sturdy plot, and a wonderfully flowing style. Incited by the fears of one rabbit, Fiver, who is prescient, a group led by the heroic Hazel (and he does truly develop as a heroic character) leave the doomed warren and go off to found a new rabbit community. Their way is beset by difficulties, especially when they escape after a stay in a regimented community and are pursued by the militant rabbits whose way of life they scorn. They are aided in their efforts to find mates by a seagull they’ve rescued (whose speech patterns are perhaps the one grating note in the book: “No fight, but vatch, vatch, always vatch. Ees no good,” as though the bird were a foreigner speaking English.) The descriptions of the Berkshire countryside are poetic, but the most enthralling aspect of the story is surely the magnitude of the rabbit world, with its cultural patterns, tradition, folklore, language, and vigor.


Meticulously illustrated with drawings that show exact details of tools, hardware, wood grains, and techniques, this is a superb first book for the amateur carpenter. Adkins explains the uses of each tool, the ways in which each variety of saw or chisel is fitted for a particular task, such procedures as dowelling, gluing, or cutting a tenon and mortise, and he describes the uses for each kind of nail and screw. This most useful book concludes with advice on the care of tools. A fine piece of craftsmanship, both in example and in execution.


An imaginative fourth grader, Susan has been having difficulty in adjusting to the fact that her father, since the divorce, has been rather casual about his infrequent visits. Although the story revolves around Susan’s love for a stray cat and a dollhouse that she’s found in the antique shop where she’s working (paying off the cost of a Lowestoft teapot she’d broken) and there are minor plot threads and relationships, it is really her acceptance of Dad’s neglect that is the testament of change. Having had to give up both cat and dollhouse, Susan has learned that there can be affection...
and interest without physical proximity. The writing is capable but the action moves at a slow pace at times, and some of the minor characters are not convincingly portrayed. One of the strong aspects of the story is the attitude adopted by Susan’s mother, who encourages ethical concepts without insisting that her children accept her dicta and who discourages any criticism of her divorced husband.


Six stories of the mythical land so beautifully conceived by Alexander are written with vivid grace and humor; some of the characters will be familiar to Prydain fans as related to major figures in the cycle: Eilonwy’s mother as a young Princess of Llyr, as independent as her daughter; Dallben the enchanter as a child; Doli of the Fair Folk. Each tale stands alone, a small gem, and the humor and romance are echoed in the soft, deft black and white Zemach drawings.


Erik Haugaard is the sort of translator about whom every editor dreams, thoroughly familiar in both languages and a writer who understands—as is evident from the fine books he has written—how to write for children. It’s valuable to have Andersen’s complete works in one volume, it’s doubly valuable when they have been translated in a style that is colloquial, flowing, and having the cadence of the oral tradition. Andersen’s notes for his stories are included, and the introduction by Haugaard makes perceptive comment on the author’s style, on the Victorian translators who “had a tendency to make a kiss on the mouth, in translation, land on the cheek,” and on the requirements of translation itself.


A most engaging piece of Victoriana, this describes the self-conscious agonies of twelve-year-old Margaret, sent with her younger brothers to stay with cousins in the country. Cousin Hester, artistic in her pretentions, coy and loquacious, is their hostess; her daughter makes a career of being frail and intellectual, and poor Margaret doesn’t know how to cope. Her brothers ignore the whole thing, running off to play and teasing Margaret unmercifully; all of the children—including languid Cousin Guenevere—are at the mercy of a quack scholar who’s been hired to tutor them. Margaret finally throws in her lot with the boys, tamed into being a child with them rather than a satellite in the salon. The characterizations are devastating and comic, some exaggerated; while the story line isn’t strong, there’s plenty of action, abundant humor, and a vivid, satirical picture of the lionhunter in artistic circles.


Eric’s family has just come from California to Paris, and the shy four-year-old is lonely; unable to understand the other children’s questions, he retreats into isolated activity in the park playground. One day an older child, Didier, makes advances so friendly that Eric cannot resist. Didier becomes his friend, but when school starts Eric is alone again. By that time he has learned a bit of French, has come to know the names of other children, and has accepted his new world. When a sad little Portuguese child sits alone, Eric brings her all the chestnuts he’s saved. The message is gentle and clear, the story nicely told although with little action; the illustrations are effective and very attractive.

Not really an almanac, this oversize book is divided into four parts, and for each of the four seasons, the busy, busy pages describe the weather, seasonal activities, holidays, “Some of the Things” the season brings, and “Actual Facts about . . .” (snow in winter; wind in spring, or rain; sun in summer, and thunder and lightning; the moon in fall). Certainly the book can serve to impress on children the distinguishing features of each season, but the “actual facts about . . .” section seems more disruptive than helpful, especially because the phenomena they describe are not necessarily seasonal. However, the bears dash about merrily, and there’s humor in many of the pictures, the animal characters will be found appealing, and there’s some text in rhyme as well as some in prose.


A treatment of the subject that is comprehensive in scope, simple in style, lucid in explanation, and given added interest by the inclusion throughout the text of home demonstrations, helpfully illustrated and clearly outlined. The text discusses the composition of water, its three states (liquid, solid, and gas), and some of the unusual properties of water; it describes the need for water in plants, human beings, and other animal life; it surveys water in agriculture and industry, describes the water cycle, and discusses the water supply and water pollution. A reading list and a relative index are appended.


An advent calendar is included with the book, in which the Christmas story is told in 24 numbered episodes, each corresponding to an illustration on the calendar. The text consists of approximately a quarter-page block of print set against the pedestrian illustrations on each page; the style of the adaptation is only a little less banal. Because of the structure, the book may have some use in suggesting a division of the material into episodes for telling, but it seems a pity to eschew for any age the beauty of Biblical language and substitute this.


An adaptation of a Russian folktale is handsomely illustrated with pictures that are simply composed, intricate in detail, and subtle in their soft, strong colors. Although the end of the story has a twist of magic that is somehow anticlimactic, the tale is nicely told, and the harmony between text and pictures is outstanding. A wood-carver, a tailor, and a teacher share in the creation of a beautiful woman. Each falls in love with her and claims her, the carver because he made her, the tailor because he dressed her beautifully, the teacher because he taught her to speak and think. An elderly sage to whom they have brought their problem decrees that the woman belongs to none of them, since nobody can ever really own anybody else. The woman then chooses the sage; when she touches him his wrinkles disappear and he becomes young and handsome.


Deenie’s mother embarrasses her, always talking about how pretty Deenie is, determined that her daughter become a model. Only twelve, Deenie really isn’t
interested; she is more concerned about her friends and her popularity, about being a 
cheerleader. When an interviewer at a model agency comments on the fact that 
there's something wrong with the way Deenie moves, and the gym teacher corrobo-
rates it, Deenie sees a doctor and learns that she has scoliosis and that she will have 
to wear a spinal brace for four years. Like many adolescents, Dennie has been 
squeamish about the physical imperfections of others and it is very difficult to adjust 
to the appearance of the brace and as well as to the discomfort—worst of all, to adjust 
to being "different" at an age when conformity and perfection seem tremendously 
important. But Deenie learns. Her friends still like her; her life isn't over, she's still 
attractive to boys, there's even another girl who tries to look as much like Deenie as 
she can. Convincingly written in first person, this is as sensitive to a child's emo-
tional needs and attitudes as are Blume's previous stories.

Bodecker, N. M., tr. *It's Raining Said John Twaining*; Danish Nursery Rhymes; tr. and illus. 

Absolutely delightful drawings with precise and comic details illustrate an adept 
translation of nursery rhymes that are Danish in origin and universal in appeal. The 
verses have a jaunty rhythm and rhyme, and the translator-artist has used personal 
and place names that will be familiar to English-speaking children: "Squire 
McGuire, how much is your lyre?" or the John Twaining of the title verse, and his 
friends John Penny, John Oats, John Square, etc.


"I'm not going to school! I'm not going to get up! I'm not going to have an 
injection! So leave me alone!" Like Judy Blume's Deenie, Sarah is twelve and re-
resents her physical condition. Why was she the one who had diabetes, why not her 
sister? Although she knows how dangerous it is to miss her injections, Sarah takes 
risks with medication and diet; she is hostile toward her sister, quarrelsome, and 
demanding. It's not until her dog proves to be diabetic that Sarah appreciates the 
insulin injections that have so irritated her: she has given the dog some of her own 
insulin and prolonged its life. As she gains perspective and becomes accustomed to 
the restrictions imposed by her condition, Sarah matures: she is more friendly to her 
sister, less self-conscious about being a diabetic, and well aware that there's a normal 
life ahead as long as she takes care. This is well-written, with good dialogue and 
believable characterization. Although the story is set in England, the subject has 
universal interest. This hasn't the dramatic appeal of Branfield's *The Poison 
Factory*, and the message is more obtrusive here, but it's a good problem-focused 
story of adolescence.

net.

Eleven-year-old Pudge is still trying to adjust to his parents' divorce and to the fact 
that his father drinks and his mother is now withdrawn, when the death of his small 
sister, hit by a runaway truck, tragically deprives him of his closest companion and 
his refuge. "Having her around to reassure was like having someone around to 
reassure him." His father's brother, Uncle Mike, is the adult to whom Pudge turns; 
Uncle Mike has lost his wife and child and understands the boy's loneliness and 
insecurity. What he does for his nephew, in Pudge's subsequent visits, is help the 
boy to understand the causes of his parents' unhappiness, to adjust to Sharon's death 
and his own guilt (if he had been taking better care of her, she wouldn't have been hit, 
Pudge feels), to accept his mother's remarriage, and—most important—to become 
independent. A lonely man himself, Uncle Mike resists the temptation to let Pudge
be dependent on him. The relationship between the two is drawn with warmth and sensitivity; indeed, all of the relationships in the story are perceptively seen. A sombre book, at times touching.

Cavin, Ruth. *1 Pinch of Sunshine, 1/2 Cup of Rain; Natural Food Recipes for Young People*; illus. by Frances Gruse Scott. Atheneum, 1973. 95p. $5.95.

Safety precepts and general instructions precede the recipes, with chapters divided in more or less conventional groupings and a few pages at the close devoted to some terms and techniques (far from comprehensive) and to advice on tools (ditto). The recipes are given clearly and are healthful but do not stress the use of health foods or organically grown produce. The names of some of the recipes tend to be on the cute side but not informative, like “After the Waltz” or “Ladybugs” or “Sailboats.”


The Reverend Septimus Treloar is an engaging and gentlemanly cleric-detective, former member of the CID, who investigates the mysterious incursions into St. Mary’s Danedyke, although he cannot imagine what there is in the church that thieves want. Septimus and the two young people who are helping him in the investigation are caught and held prisoners on a boat, but engineer both an escape and the capture of the culprits who have stolen a valuable religious relic; the story ends with a suave bit of blackmail by the parson, who forces the absent leader of the thieves to make a sizable “voluntary” contribution to the church. Lively style, good construction, better characterization than there is in most mystery stories, and a brisk pace contribute to the value of a tale with well-maintained suspense.

Chardiet, Bernice, ad. *Juan Bobo and the Pig; A Puerto Rican Folktale retold*; illus. by Hope Meryman. Walker, 1973. 24p. Trade ed. $5.95; Library ed. $5.83 net.

A noodlehead story is retold in static style, the text illustrated by woodcuts of variable quality—some too busy with detail, others effectively composed. The weakness of the book is primarily in the story itself, since it has neither a strong ending to give dramatic impact nor any more than a modicum of humor in the situation. Juan Bobo is a feckless child whose mother adjures him to stay indoors while she goes to church, to watch the animals, and to stay out of trouble. When the pig plaintively oinks, Juan Bobo decides that the pig is lonesome for Mama. Since one must dress up for church, Juan Bobo puts his mother’s best clothes on the pig; Mama finds the animal rolling in the mud and her best clothes ruined. She gives Juan Bobo a spanking, “the spanking of his life,” to teach him a lesson. “Juan Bobo never forgot that spanking,” the story ends, “But what was the lesson? He could not remember.”


Angry because she didn’t want to keep her room clean or go bed early, Martha Ann marches her mother off to the Mother Store, sat her down, and picked another mother. She didn’t make Martha Ann clean her room, but she made a mess of her own room; the next trial mother let Martha Ann stay up as long as she wanted, but all that TV hurt Martha Ann’s eyes; two more tries and Martha Ann was ready to go back to her own mother, who explained that she cared what Martha Ann did because she loved her. “And right that minute a warm, tickly, tingly feeling began to fill Martha Ann,” and she happily took her old mother home. The message about discipline is gentle, but the story is weakened by the staccato action; the illustrations have a raffish charm.

Tales from Chesnutt’s *Conjure Woman*; published in 1899, the stories had first appeared separately in the *Atlantic Monthly*. These early stories by a black author are vigorous and humorous, full of action and drama, yet they reveal fully the injustice and cruelty of slavery. Ray Shepard has retold the tales brilliantly, with the true cadence and flow of the oral tradition.


An oversize book profusely illustrated with beautiful color photographs and useful location maps is designed, as the editor’s introductory section makes clear, for the automobile age, for neophyte naturalists who can use the text and the maps when they visit sites throughout the United States. Although this does not pretend to be comprehensive in coverage, it gives a considerable amount of information on such topics as rocks and minerals, trees, wildflowers, birds, insects, et cetera. The writing varies from section to section, occasionally orante, but written by subject experts and therefore authoritative; the maps are particularly useful, both the range maps and such maps as those on climate and temperature, rainfall and sunshine, or public lands—topics that are not covered in the text. A glossary, a list of books suggested for reading (many of which are guides or handbooks), and an index are appended.


Beautifully illustrated and written with simplicity, a brief text covers just enough material to explain what plants do in winter and why evergreens are able to keep their leaves. With no extraneous material, the book closes with the fact that “no one knows all about plants in winter—yet.” What a nice invitation to learn more!


There are many books that explain the functioning of a camera or the techniques of photography. This book does that, but it offers more: for the beginner, it teaches ways to make images—writing with light—without a camera or with a simple and inexpensive one the reader can make, and it teaches the reader to use his eyes, to be aware of light and changes in light. Later chapters of the book describe developing and printing procedures; throughout the text there is an emphasis on awareness, on using photography to communicate. While there are many pictures, and most of them are handsome, there are few pictures that illustrate specific comments of the text or that clarify textual explanations, a minor flaw in a book that is otherwise impressive.


Grey Owl had been a trapper until his wife, Anahareo, had shown her distaste for his work; then, enchanted by the two beaver kits they acquired, he turned to writing and lecturing about the beauty of the wilderness, the need for conservation, and the pride and dignity of the Indian way of life. Not until he died did it become known that Grey Owl, who had said he was the child of a Scottish father and an Apache mother, was really Archie Belaney, who had come from England to Canada when he was eighteen and had adopted the Indian role in which he was to become famous. Dickson, his English publisher, who had arranged lecture tours and B.B.C. programs for Grey Owl, at first investigated the claims of English relatives with disbelief, but his
research—and this biography—proved even more fascinating than the putative story of an Indian. The book is candid and forceful, and it succeeds in substantiating Dickson’s conclusion: what Grey Owl achieved as a naturalist was more important than the facts of his origins.

Dobrin, Arnold. Going to Moscow and Other Stories; written and illus. by Arnold Dobrin. Four Winds, 1973. 47p. Trade ed. $4.95; Library ed. $4.88 net.

Three tales in the folk tradition, adequately told and illustrated with pictures that are bold with bright red and blue but that do not always seem to agree with the text. The first story tells of the old man whose hands were so rigidly held in front of him that all the passengers on the coach to Moscow helped and fed him; at the end he says he is not paralyzed, but is holding his hands so that he won’t forget his wife’s shoe size. The second tale is of a mean peasant outwitted by a boy she’s defrauded, the third the story of an orphan who refuses to be adopted by wealthy city friends because the ultimate he could hope for—the leisure to retire to the country and fish—he already has. The stories are only mildly humorous, the writing style pleasant enough but, lacking cadence or sonority, the book is only moderately suitable for reading aloud, its chief asset being a simplicity that is suitable for the read-aloud audience.


An explanation of the menstrual cycle is full and detailed, covering most of the questions, fears, and misconceptions about the process as well as giving the facts. Indeed, the book moves rather slowly through a survey of superstitions of past and present before describing the physical changes and emotional side-effects of the menstrual period. Occasionally the text falls into such phrases as “This bleeding is normal and healthy; nature planned it that way . . .” but for the most part it is factual, and it describes the changes of pregnancy and menopause as well as of menstruation. A glossary and an index are preceded by some “Quotes from Teen-agers” that seem rather pointless.


Although this gives little information, it does suggest to the reader some of the interesting ways in which mirrors can be used; it mentions the huge, curved mirror in a telescope, for example, and says that it “collects” light from the star, but does not explain what this means. Most of the text points out such facts as these: backward writing can be read in a mirror; some curved mirrors magnify, some distort; mirrors reverse images, etc. The authors use a bland style and many questions: “Try this . . . Can you see your mirror-image in it? How does it look different from your image in a flat mirror? Do you look thinner? . . . Now turn the spoon around . . . Do you see yourself upside-down?”


When Hector Penguin fell off a zoo truck and found himself in a forest near a pond, he was disconsolate. None of the other animals had ever seen a penguin, and they thought him very odd; each indignantly disclaimed relationship. Then a wise crow who had seen penguins in a zoo lauded Hector’s abilities and arranged a race across the pond that Hector won easily. Impressed, the animals all became friendly and
Hector decided the pond in the forest was a nice place to live, "almost as nice as the Antarctic." Although this is in the familiar "achieve and be accepted" vein (rather than being accepted for what one is) it's a mild and affable tale written in a fairly lively style, and the color illustrations of woodland creatures are distinctive.


Written simply enough for the beginning reader, this slight story can also be read to preschool children. The message is worthy, the style staccato, the illustrations adequate but pedestrian. Three children see a sign that says, "For sale, last empty ground in town," and they note that the area is filled with wild life. They put up signs saying, "Here live bees," or "Here lives raccoon," and the signs are seen by adults, who contact the mayor, who decrees that the land shall become a park. "Now we have a place to play," say the children, and one of them makes a new sign: "The little park of little things." The book shows appreciation of nature and hints at conservation, but the plot seems too contrived, the solution too easy.


Not a book about the role of the homemaker but a description of some of the objects that were made in colonial homes, this explains the techniques used in making brooms, candles, cider, and soap. Each of the four sections gives some background information and discusses the materials, equipment, and the processes of making the objects. Although the information is interesting, the coverage of only four products and the rather misleading title may disappoint readers. The illustrations are dramatic and informative; an index is appended.


Another braggadocio tall tale from the indomitable farmer McBroom whose lush land grew things so fast that a crop in one day was considered slow-growing. Plagued doubly by a drought and by giant mosquitoes, McBroom brought rain by chasing a raincloud and planting onion seeds in a wagon filled with the wonderful McBroom soil. When the thirsty mosquitoes attacked the Instant Giant Onions, their tears finally brought rain to the parched earth. Sheer ebullient nonsense, the fun is augmented by the lively Werth drawings.


An introduction to some basic facts about geology relates types of rock to those rocks that are familiar to city children: the granite of curbstones, the marble slabs on public buildings, the sandstone fronts of brownstone houses, etc. The text mentions fossils and briefly introduces the subject of the volcanic rocks of the moon. While the writing is fluid, at times almost poetic, and the facts are accurate, the organization of material is occasionally disjointed; the photographs are magnificently clear.


More intricate in structure than Gardam’s earlier books, this has the same felicitous perspicience and fluency, the characters seen with a slightly amused, slightly ironic affection. Here the major part of the story is devoted to the gentle, lovely Athene whose older brother and younger sister have gone off, as she has, after their father’s death. Their mother has arranged their summer plans by bullying, whee-
dling, and manipulating friends and relatives. The younger girl unhappily puts up with her hearty, ebullient hosts; Sebastian has cannily chosen an Anglican retreat in Scotland; Athene meanders from host to host, managing to fall in love twice. And all the time their mother is bustling around looking for a new home and imposing on others. The threads are deftly pulled together in a satisfying and logical conclusion to a story written with grace and wit.


Like the Cavin book, reviewed above, this stresses the use of natural foods; here there is some discussion of cold-pressed oils, unbleached flour, and organically-grown vegetables, as well as a list of safety measures. The arrangement of recipes is by major meals, with separate sections for snacks, desserts, and drinks. The quality and difficulty of the recipes differ little from those in Cavin's book, but the recipes seem more useful because they are preceded by lists of utensils as well as lists of ingredients, and because the pictures of utensils and of techniques of preparation are more specific.


A survey of American art from the 1820's through the 1860's is a companion volume to Glubok's earlier books, *The Art of Colonial America* and *The Art of the New American Nation.* The text is written in a direct, unassuming style and relates the examples of painting, sculpture, architecture, and home decoration both to events of the period and to such stylistic trends as the revival of classicism or contemporary Victorianism; the book concludes with the advent of a new medium, photography. While this is not comprehensive, it is an excellent overview of the art of almost a half-century of life in America, and it should be of interest both to the art student and the history student.


Another story in which the pig Paddy Pork appears, this time sitting in a theatre box with a friend who drops a fan. Paddy falls into the orchestra pit trying to retrieve the fan, is shuttled through the pit door and then proceeds to disrupt the performance with repeated appearances on stage: he emerges from a magician's trunk, he descends from the flies, he pops up in a congratulatory bouquet. Finally he is cheered as he emerges from the stage door, an impromptu variety show idol. While the inserted half-pages that conceal a surprise action are still as entertaining a device as they were in earlier books, this no-words picture book seems more repetitive in structure. The pictures are lively and attractive, but the unfamiliar milieu may make the story a shade less comprehensible than *The Adventures of Paddy Pork.*


A simplified and nicely told adaptation of the story of the foolish wife who took everything her husband said literally, and who—being a noodlehead—did one stupid thing after another. For example, when her husband told her not to go near the box of yellow buttons (gold coins) he'd buried, she didn't. But she told some peddlers to dig up the box. The recovery of their small fortune is due less to Kate's cleverness than to her fatigue, but it's a happy ending to an amusing tale, and the illustrations, light and charming, use color, floral frames, and peasant dress to capture to perfection the mood of the story.

A description of the author's travels through Turkey on an archaeological ramble is illustrated with photographs that are as enticing as the text. The discoveries that are being made in Turkey by contemporary archaeologists are fascinating in themselves, but a less capable writer might have given a dry account; Hamblin is witty, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable, and she writes with polished ease. A divided bibliography and an extensive index are appended.


Written in a casual, staccato style, short chapters that are distinct episodes give some of the small adventures in the life of a cheerful, rather slapdash ten-year-old. No sexism here: Delilah loves basketball and drumming, her parents both have jobs and take turns doing housework. While the lack of a storyline and the choppy style may seem drawbacks to some readers, the book has some strong assets: Delilah is an engaging character, her relationship with her parents is warm and friendly, the incidents are realistic, and the writing has a casual humor that is appealing.


One of the most engaging collections of poems about animals to be published in a long time is illustrated with raffish drawings that echo the cheerful tone of the writing. Some of the poems are haiku-brief, some are free verse, some patterned, and almost all of them give information that is accurate and unobtrusive—but any lesson to be learned is ancillary; this is a book that's full of wit and humor, these are poems that are deft and memorable.


A retelling of one of the most popular legends of an Eskimo folk hero, Kiviok, is illustrated by the author with drawings that are vigorous and dramatic. The tale is one that has several variants in other cultures: a bird-maiden weds a human, later flies off to join her kind, and—after her husband has sought and found her—renounces her animal form forever. Here the story contains both the milieu of the culture and some other folk characters peculiar to the North American continent, particularly Raven. Raven steals the white feather coat of the snow goose while she is in human form, and Kiviok takes her as his wife; she cannot resist the calls of the migrating geese seven years later, and uses feathers to improvise wings for herself and her children. Helped by the giant Inukpuk and the magic fish that carry him to his family, Kiviok goes south and fights the wicked Raven; the fish carry the family homeward and the geese-children and wife fly for the last time, Kiviok clutching their feet, to their home in the far north.


A survey of black history in this country begins with background chapters about the high level of sophistication in ancient African kingdoms and about the beginnings of the slave trade in Africa. Emphasis is on the long struggle for freedom and equality. The text is adequately written and the photographs well chosen, but the book seems somewhat random in choice of material: for example, while the index shows
entries for Bessie Smith, "Jelly Roll" Morton, and Joe Louis, it has no citations for Benjamin Forten, Benjamin Banneker, Robert Smalls, or George Washington Carver. There is a list of outstanding black Americans that does include some of these names. Although most of the black history books are written for slightly older readers, they are so much better written and so much more informative that a history as sketchy as this one pales in contrast.


One of the best of the recent books on venereal disease, this is directed specifically toward adolescents, but it can serve as well as a book for adults. It is frank, comprehensive, and accurate; it eschews moral judgments or scare tactics. Johnson gives statistics by age groups on the frequency of syphilis and gonorrhea, describes the methods by which they may be passed on, their symptoms and development, and discusses their treatment and cure. He emphasizes the facts that in all but three states, adolescents may see a doctor without parental knowledge or permission and that diagnosis and treatment can be obtained at no cost. The book ends with chapters on the volunteer group—Operation Venus—working to give advice and help, and on some of the many questions that have been asked about the nature, treatment, and prevalence of V.D. An index is appended.


One of a series of animal books produced by the National Wildlife Federation ("Ranger Rick's Best Friends") this comprises a badly written and illustrated minatory tale about how people should behave when they encounter bears in national parks, several articles about different kinds of bears (adequately written and illustrated by color photographs), and another "Ranger Rick" story about Rick—a raccoon—adrift on an iceberg and rescued by a polar bear who pushes him to safety and says, "Now that more people have learned about some of our problems, they have stopped illegal hunting. They are now listening to trained wildlife biologists and we feel a lot more secure." The last pages describe habitats and give advice on "When you see a bear..." Without the poor calibre stories and with a little more information, this book might be of some value.


Two dogs salvage some roller skates from a trash can, and in an almost wordless picture book do a sort of vaudeville act as they careen about, falling and barging into each other and some hapless kittens that get in their way. The action and the situation will probably appeal to pre-readers; the pictures are lively and colorful, the text weakened by the fact that after one double spill the dogs, bandaged, say, "I've had it!" and "Yeah! Who wants to skate anyway?" yet are somehow still on skates for the final episode.


A useful book despite the dull writing style, this is quite different from Adkins' Toolchest, reviewed above. The emphasis here is on career guidance, with information about apprenticeship programs, high school preparation, specialities within the field of carpentry, salaries and benefits, etc. Although this covers more tools and hardware than does the Adkins book, it gives almost no information about the ways in which tools should be used or cared for, nor does it give many facts about wood. Above all, this lacks any note of pride in craftsmanship, although it mentions the
pleasure carpenters may have in their skill and the durability of their work. In addition to an index and a glossary, the book includes a list of field offices of the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training, a series of “Practice Questions on Mechanical Insight,” a trade experience schedule for apprentices, a “Vocational Skills Record,” and a list of Civil Service Commission Offices.


With his usual mastery of color and composition, Lionni has created charming and effective pictures for a story with two levels; the book can be understood only for the storyline or, by perceptive listeners, for the inner message. A group of field mice, dazzled by a visitor’s description of Mardi Gras, don masks and costumes and gradually forget that they are not the ferocious animals they’re pretending to be. Finally they are frightened by one of their own kind, unmasked, and only when they remove their masks and see each other and themselves as they really are does the community revert to its peaceful life. Only the little fieldmouse who had painted her tail green cannot change.


Scribbly drawings fill the pages in which a boy, a girl, and some animals are shown in a series of situations that point to the fact that males and females can have the same occupations, and that are filled with jokes, many of them puns. For example, on one page the girl says, “I am a milkwoman, I deliver fresh milk to everyone,” while on the facing page the boy—sitting on a cow—says, “Who ever heard of a milk *woman*? Who ever heard of a *female* delivering milk? The irate cow says, “Are you kidding?” A bystander asks, “Are you a boy cow or a girl cow?” and a ubiquitous snail comments, “That’s no bull!” The message of equality is of some value, but the cartoon-style drawings and breezy text are comic-book humor.


First published in Germany under the title *Wie Funktioniert Das?* and long popular in translation as an adult reference source, this adaptation for young people is excellent. The articles (arranged under such rubrics as “Electricity at Work,” “Around the House,” or “Internal Combustion Engines”) are succinct and clear in their explanations of how machines work or of the theories on which the machines are based, and the diagrams are equally clear, adequately captioned, and well-placed in relation to the pertinent text. An extensive index is appended.


“Jane! Are you out/Of your silly head/Why are you painting the water red?/Everyone knows that water’s blue.”/“‘Everyone,’ Jane said/‘Isn’t you.’” As the weather changes from day to day, at different times of day, or in different places, Jane and her brother discover that the sea she’d been painting can be cold grey, icy green, vividly blue, red in the sunset and pink at dawn. The verses are capably written, the pictures are lovely in their softness and their vivid colors, and the concept may make children realize that there is more to color than the obvious, more to see than a blue ocean—but this will be somewhat limited for children who have

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never seen the sea, and for any reader the book may be of limited interest because there is no plot and little action.


An anthology illustrated in romantic turn-of-the-century style by one of Sweden's major illustrators. The trolls are misshapen but not ferocious, the princesses slim and shining fair, just as they are in the stories, which have—despite the varied authorship—a gentle quality that pervades the tales of magic. Most of the stories in the book, first published in Sweden in 1966, are by Anna Wahlenberg, and the translations are smooth and idiomatic.


Karen didn't consider herself a tragic heroine, but she did feel that her sisters had more adult approval, that her father felt no real concern, and that her mother was too preoccupied with being a Perfect Lady to accept a Karen who didn't fit that image. And so Karen fell deeply in love when she loved; Steve Nakamura filled her life. When she found that she was pregnant, she turned to Steve and learned that he really cared less for her than for his future. Her mother took Karen to New York to have an abortion, and in the course of being together mother and daughter learned to understand each other better. While this is realistic and capably written, with good dialogue and believable characters, it lacks impact; somehow, despite the shock Karen has in learning that she is pregnant, the second shock of disappointment in Steve, and the trauma of the parental reaction (she tells them a boy whose last name she never knew had made her drunk) there's little feeling of conflict in the events.


Another amusing wordless picture book about that happy foursome of frog, dog, turtle, and boy. Here they set off for a jaunt in a public park and frog is separated from his friends. At first he scampers happily about, but he soon finds that people do not take kindly to such friendly overtures as sharing a carriage with a baby or emerging from an inviting picnic basket. Chased by a cat, frog is rescued by his friends and is carried off in the arms of his boy. The story line is crystal clear, and the pictures have a blithe quality that is engaging.


Dignified illustrations, realistic and uncluttered, help tell a quiet, almost sedate, shaggy dog story. The dog escapes from his chain while his owner is lying in the sun; he is taken in by a family. The two children persuade their parents to let them keep the dog until his owner advertises. A year goes by, a year in which the children learn that their dog is gentle, loving, and obedient. The next summer the dog catches a familiar scent. His owner is back for vacation; she doesn't recognize the shaggy dog that has happily been rolling in mud, and she has a new poodle. The dog trots off to his children, his allegiance now complete. A gentle book, but static.


Paintings in soft, bright colors alternate with black and white wash drawings to illustrate the procession of small creatures that speak tenderly, gently of love. "If I
were a cricket, all though the autumn nights I would sing for you... If I were a snail carrying my house on my back in the rain, I would move next door to you, so I could see you every day." the book begins, and ends with a picture of children, one smiling and saying, "There are many ways to say that I love you. But I just smile to let you know I do that." While the quiet tone and lack of action may limit the audience, for some children and the serenity and warmth of the message, the poetic quality of the prose, and the fact that the creatures are small and familiar may have a special appeal.


The story of the Lincoln years in the White House is told by a putative Tad Lincoln and illustrated with soft, realistic drawings that capture the serious and formal air of contemporary engravings. Tad’s account is ingenuous but not cute, appropriately casual and conversational, and nicely balanced between personal anecdotal and historical coverage. Monjo’s special talent is in his selectivity; his child’s-viewpoint books of biography or historical fiction are convincing because his children remember the sorts of things that are of natural interest to children; the books are also valuable because, however informally presented, their facts are accurate. A bibliography of sources is appended, preceded by an author’s note that gives background information.


A sequel to *Ox: The Story of a Kid at the Top*, a first person story of a very, very rich boy. Ox is now fifteen and has been sent to a Vermont summer camp from his home in Palm Beach. He finds New Englanders phony, but his interest is captured by his cabin-mates, Lattimore and Campbell. When Ox and Lattimore hear Campbell’s story they are more than interested: an orphan, he is being bilked by scheming grandparents who plan to declare him insane (they’re doing every thing they can to get him to that state) and seize his enormous trust fund. The book is better written than its predecessor and it has some brilliant moments of acidity and devastating characterizations, especially in the picture of the grandparents, who have convinced their family, their neighbors, and a psychiatrist that they are saintly benefactors; but there are too many characters, too much drama, almost too lurid a solution (an aging sympathetic retired actress gets Campbell out of his grandparents’ house and sets off a bomb, killing herself as well as the two she considers criminally insane) to fulfill its potential.


A rhyming tale in an oversize book; some of the pages have large-scale pictures, others have four small frames with a line of text beneath each, and all of the pictures by Oxenbury, a Greenaway Medal winner, are light and frolicsome and lovely. Briggs and Bertha, two totally bored pigs who dream of wealth and leisure, unearth a box of jewels which they take to a bank. On a mad spending spree, they acquire a house, an elegant car, new clothes, gadgets—everything a pig could want. But luxury palls, the gadgets don’t work, the lush lawn needs mowing, and at last the fretful pair run away from their house, shedding clothing as they go, and happily resume their old style of sloth and freedom. The illustrations are the strength of the book, but the tale itself and the style of telling are quite adequate.

The lassitude of a hot summer day affects Anthony and Sabrina, who squabble aimlessly and almost listlessly; they talk their mother into driving to their grandparents’ farm, where the bickering goes on. Sabrina falls in a pond, Anthony orders her to stay up on the limb of a persimmon tree until she dies. When their grandmother later says, “Well, what have my two sweet babies been doing today?” both children agree that they were just playing. The pictures are attractive, the text is realistic but static, demonstrating little except the united front children maintain against their elders; if the situation is familiar to them, some children may find it amusing or soothing to read of other brothers and sisters squabbling.


There’s an old-country lilt to the language of a non-storybook that contrasts wealth and poverty as a Russian peasant child might see it, and the pictures fit the text nicely, with alternations of color (for the extravagant ways of the czar) and black and white (for the modest, hard-working peasant). How does a czar eat potatoes? A soldier shoots them through a wall of butter into the czar’s mouth. Then, “Tell me, child, how does your father eat potatoes?” He grabs a handful and eats them fast, with cabbage—if there is any. So the pattern repeats: how does a czar drink tea, how does your father drink tea, et cetera. But in the end, when it comes to the question of happiness, it is the poor farmer with his many children who can leap and dance and sing, his face shining, happier than any czar.


A simply written book on classification of flora and Fauna, nicely illustrated and logically organized. The text explains clearly the divisions of classification, introducing the subject by a discussion of the need for order and grouping of objects. A brief mention of ecological, nutritional, and library classification systems can stimulate the reader’s curiosity about other groupings, systems, and accepted conventions in classification. Nothing new here, but the writing is lucid and the subject handled with crisp authority.


An introduction to chess is adequate in explaining the moves of each piece, gives only one game as an example and therefore gives very little information about strategy, and is not as clear in its diagrams (or in text) as Kidder’s *Illustrated Chess for Children*, which is written for the same audience. In several places, doublepage spreads carry crowded illustrations with odd bits of information (“There are 204 squares and 1,296 rectangles on a chessboard.”) that contribute nothing. There is no table of contents or index.


A story set in Kenya portrays the conflict a young boy feels between loyalty to a family member and his own sense of justice. Mugo has been told to accompany his uncle Joshua, a militant forest fighter, to Mombasa. Joshua is being hunted both by the police and by another forest fighter who has become his enemy. He is to pretend
blindness, and Mugo will guide him. Mugo is already nervous, never having been away from his village, and on the journey he becomes increasingly suspicious of the motives of Joshua, cruel and callous to his nephew. In the end, Joshua proves to be even more treacherous than Mugo had suspected. The story is dulled by the repetitive pattern of the events of the journey, the ending seems contrived, and the plot and characters are established rather than developed; Mugo learns more about Joshua as time progresses but there is little change in him—or Joshua—in reaction to events.


“Long ago, when magic was everyday, instead of maybe, there lived in a small kingdom, a princess, who was as beautiful as...” the story begins in true fairytale style, and all of the adventures of the princess are so told: her being hurt by giants after she has scaled a high mountain to rescue a silver bird, her fear of the dungeon cave where she might be made a slave, and so on. The pictures use one color for fantasy, or fantasizing, while the black and white lines show reality: a freckle-faced, imaginative farm girl being spanked after she has climbed the roof to reach the weather-vane; the kitchen where there are heaps of pans to wash. Nicely told, and the illustrations are adequate, but the book is weakened by lack of a story line.


Because his parents didn’t give him as many doughnuts (or donuts) as he wanted, Sam hopped on his tricycle and rode off to the city where he met Mr. Bikferd, who collected doughnuts and asked Sam to be his helper. They met the old woman who said she didn’t need them, she had love; when Mr. Bikferd met Pretzel Annie, he realized it was true. He gave Sam all his doughnuts and Sam used them to save the life of the old woman when her basement home became flooded with coffee; they absorbed all the liquid. Then Sam decided he didn’t need doughnuts, he had love, so he went home. The elements of nonsense and exaggeration may seem funny to some children, but the plot is thin and the story seems only a vehicle for the illustrations, which are crowded with cartoon-style grotesqueries, tiny signs, odd creatures, silly details, and puns.


Twelve-year-old Joshua is determined to learn all about everything, to read through the encyclopedia, and—unfortunately for his family—to share all the facts he finds so fascinating. He’s bothered by his parents’ resistance to this, still more bothered by the fact that they don’t seem to worry about him. When he meets the new family who’ve moved to the neighborhood, Josh is intrigued by their different life-style: the Arthurs are many and motherless, cheerful and friendly, casual, all the things that his solid family is not. In part through his acquaintance with the Arthurs, in part through his analysis of himself and others, Josh matures, learning to control his tongue and his temper. The writing style and dialogue are excellent, the characterization variable, the adults (and Joshua’s relationships with them) more fully developed than the children, save for Josh himself. The dialogue is good, often funny, but the plot moves rather slowly.

Erratum: The review of Suzanne Fulle’s *Lanterns for Fiesta* (February issue, p. 94) should have been coded “M” rather than “R”. Sorry.
BIBLIOGRAPHIES

To order any of the items listed here, please write directly to the publisher of the item, not to the BULLETIN of the Center for Children's Books.


People Power; a brief, annotated bibliography of biographies for young adults. Comp. by the Children's and Young People's Section of the New Jersey Library Association. $10 each with an $.08 stamped, self-addressed envelope; quantity rates. Make checks payable to NJLA-CYP Booklists. Available from Ms. Sally Sullivan, People Power Committee, Madison Public Library, 39 Keep St., Madison, NJ 07940.


