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PRODUCTION NOTE

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Urbana-Champaign Library
EXPLANATION OF CODE SYMBOLS USED
WITH ANNOTATIONS

* Asterisks denote books of special distinction.
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 collections.
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.
C.U. Curricular Use.
D.V. Developmental Values.

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New Titles for Children and Young People


A smooth and simplified retelling of Andersen’s classic story of the power of love, this is in oversize format that affords the artist an opportunity for stunning paintings, soft and romantic in hues and mood but strong in composition and in the use of imaginative details, often sensuously textured. While the book can be used for reading aloud to younger children, the length of the story and the concept of love’s transmuting power indicate the middle grades as prime audience.


After spending two unsuccessful years in California during the Gold Rush, Johnny’s feckless father decides to try his luck in China, but hears about the gold strike in Australia and changes his plans. At Ballarat, where they stake their claim, thirteen-year-old Johnny and his father have no luck; they lead a meager existence, working to the point of exhaustion, and they are beset by physical and financial woes. His father contracts pneumonia after a mine cave-in, and dies. Although most of the miners are rough characters, two of them (ex-convicts) help Johnny with passage money so that he can go back to America. The book has a good deal of information about the settlement of Australia, the Aborigines (one of whom becomes Jonathan’s friend), and conditions at the mining camps of the mid-nineteenth century; although Jonathan is a sympathetic and believable character, the story seems to use him as a vehicle for material about the setting rather than to use the setting as background for a story line.


Samantha, when her story starts, is miserable because she’s been jilted by the school’s football star, Bogie; ready to do anything to get him back, Sam is no more than superficially interested in the problems of those around her. This is fairly patterned in the way the protagonist comes to realize that her hero is cardboard and the boy next door (crippled by polio but a blithe spirit) courageous, but it’s written in lively style and has good dialogue and relationships. The several subplots (her best friend’s alcoholic mother attempts suicide; Sam is roped into a series of lies when Bogie foists a stolen parrot on her) add a bit of variety, but the focus is on Sam’s obsession with Bogie and her slow realization that she’s been used by him.

D.V. Ethical concepts; Friendship values; Handicaps, overcoming

[ 121 ]

The authors include a diversified range of material in their text, which begins with an explanation of the structure and functioning of the nerves, muscles, bones, skin, circulation, and glands in human hands. Other topics include fingerprints (and how to take their impression), hand language, palm reading and handwriting, making shadow pictures, gestures, left-handedness, etc. No subject is covered at great length, but each is given good introductory treatment, and the bibliographic references at the close of the book invite further study. An index gives access to the many topics.


English translation and a pronunciation guide are furnished in this and in other books in a series of easy menu ethnic cookbooks that give background information about each country (Chinese, English, French, Japanese, Mexican, Norwegian, and Spanish cookbooks are included in the series) and that are illustrated with full-color photographs. Information on utensils, cooking terms, and special ingredients precede the recipes. Although many of the dishes require a long list of ingredients and some recipes consist of many steps, the step-by-step numbered instructions are clear. Cooking and safety hints are included, as are a metric conversion chart and an index.


Pleasant color photographs illustrate a contrived and plodding text that is designed, according to the jacket copy, to be "an inspiring allegory illustrating the delicate balance between life and death." Since there are many good stories and informational books that introduce the subject to children, there seems little to be gained by adding this anthropomorphic tale about Freddie, a leaf that chats with other leaves named Alfred, Ben, Clare, and Daniel. Freddie learns to understand why leaves change color in the fall, why each leaf is different, and why his friend Daniel smiles peacefully as he falls. Then, the last leaf on the tree, Freddie falls. "He did not know that what appeared to be his useless dried self would join with the water and serve to make the tree stronger." Mawkish.


Adolescent Tom, the only one of the three Lockwood children still at home, bears the brunt of the family’s problems with their large sheepdog, Precious. A loving animal, Precious becomes ferocious when he is frightened or when he thinks one of his family is in danger. The trouble is that the dog seems to have no judgment about the reality of such danger—and Tom is told by a veterinarian that the dog is schizoid. The Lockwoods try therapeutic surgery, but Precious isn’t cured, and in the end, Tom and his father have the dog given a fatal drug after almost every member of the family has been bitten. Written with casual fluency and a sympathy that never becomes maudlin, this is a moving animal story based in part on a similar situation in the author’s family.

D.V. Animals, kindness to

In a third book about Molly, she is disgruntled because her best friend Tsippi, ever since she began menstruating, has been hanging around the older girls at school and ignoring Molly. They have a quarrel, and Molly gets even by telling the class chatter-box that Tsippi's parents are communists, a fact of which Molly knows Tsippi is ashamed. The girls make up, in a story in which the plot is less emphasized than family life, Jewish customs, and the arduous small events of growing up. The time is World War II, and there are enough period details to give flavor, but the appeal here, as in other Chaikin books, is Molly herself, a likable and believable child who relates intensely to the people and events in her life.

D.V. Ethical concepts; Friendship values; Interreligious understanding


It began quite uneventfully: Spence drew circles, colored them, and cut them out. Unfortunately, when he began using glue it got in his hair; when he tried to get it off with paper, the paper stuck to the glue; by the time his mother saw him, Spence had chopped off some of his hair and had got some of the hair on his face. Fortunately, his mother thought it was funny and said, "Just think. You did it all by yourself," and took him off to help clean up. This has the disaster humor that appeals to young children and it presents an admirably unruffled mother. The tinted line drawings have some humor if little finesse, the text is simply written; what weakens the book is the not quite believable obtuseness Spence displays in making things worse than they are.

D.V. Mother-son relations


Mike and Nita, to account for skipping journalism class, tell Mr. Kroeger, their teacher, that they've been working on a story. Nita mendaciously says it is a story about drugs. Asked to write it up, they comply, and soon the high school's in turmoil, since Mike's article mentions a "letterman" who's involved. The coach and principal are angry at Mr. Kroeger, who won't divulge the author of the article; the teacher is jailed because he won't give the information to a judge; a student is beaten, and the whole thing gets out of hand, to end only when Nita and Mike solve the case by spotting the dealer and the pusher. There's plenty of action, although it's not always believable; there's little characterization, some suspense, and adequate structure in a story in which subject is of more importance than writing style in appealing to readers.


"It's not just a sickness. It changes people," said elderly Mrs. Cribbins, who was the first to realize that Marty's body had been taken over by some evil force. He had tried and failed to breathe into her mouth; with his friend Tony he had succeeded. Neither eyes nor skin could tolerate light, and each victim tried to breathe into other people by force. Tony's sister Nora and her friend Maxine know something strange and violent is going on. All the victims walk at night, searching for others to contaminate. The girls know this; the adults they tell are unbelieving. The epidemic spreads, and the girls decide to take action. The author maintains suspense nicely, and creates a believable sense of horror felt by Maxine and Nora; although the explanation is explicit, it is medically intricate and improbable: the children's bodies
have been taken over by a fungus that so changes cells that the children become a fungus. The writing is smooth and the plot adequately structured; the ending is the weakest part of the story, in part because of the fungus (medically strange but acceptable in a fantasy) and in part because the changes in body cells don't account for the malevolence of those who have the disease.


Collie (Colleen) is eleven when this story of her adolescence begins, and she's packing to go off to college when it ends. In those years in the 1960's, she squabbles with her sister, has a first love affair that ends unhappily, writes the play for the Catholic girls high school she attends, etc. There are two sustained threads: one is her on-and-off friendship with another girl, the other is her writing, chiefly poetry. The book is based in part, the jacket copy states, on the author's own childhood, as are so many first novels. Its strength is in the writing style and the consistency (if not the depth) of characterization; its weakness is in the long introspective passages that slow the pace, which is already uneven because of the staccato structure.


Cooper has added one character, the son, in her fluent retelling of a folk tale that explains why white water lilies float on a lake in the Welsh mountains. Stern and greedy, Gwilym refuses to let his son Huw go to school as do the other boys, although it is through Huw that he has become wealthy. The magic people of the lake had sent Huw a silver cow in return for his skill as a harper, and the cow and her silver progeny gave milk so rich that they had brought riches to their owner. When the silver cow grew old and Gwilym arranged to have her slaughtered, a voice from the lake called all the silver cows—and where they had returned to their watery home, a water lily grew, one for each silver cow. The story is poignant and firmly structured; the watercolor paintings are distinctive for their use of light and shadow as well as for the softness of their colors, especially in the outdoor scenes.

C.U. Reading aloud


The bright frieze of pictures shows the vendors, the gathering crowd, and then the parade: marching band, baton twirlers, floats, antique cars and bicycles, and a fire engine. The crowd disperses, and the book ends as it began, with a truck from the Sanitation Department cleaning the parade route. Most children enjoy the color and action and music of a parade, and this is a vivid depiction that should have instant appeal.


Seven young people discuss the work they do as trainers of animals who work with and for the disabled. They describe their own training for the work they do, explain how they train the animals, and cite examples of some of the adults and children with whom they have worked to get the best cooperation between animal and person. There's a calm tone to the writing, but the reports are exciting as well as informative. In addition to the index, the author provides a final chapter that gives sources of
information, both general and specific, i.e. facts on guide dogs for the blind or on therapeutic horseback riding.

C.U. Vocational guidance
D.V. Handicaps, overcoming


Overworked while her lazy father sits with his friends in the piazza, Bambolona decides she is through, and she signs on as an apprentice to Strega Nona; when stupid Big Anthony tries to pretend he’s a girl so that he too can learn a witch’s magic, he can’t learn a thing and creates havoc. Bambolona and Strega Nona trick him into admitting his deceitfulness, and there the story ends abruptly as Strega Nona tells him to change his clothes, “You’re wearing Signora Rosa’s nicest dress.” The paintings are standard de Paola: fresh, light colors and comic tubby figures; the story is breezy and amusing although not very smoothly structured.


Set in a small Georgia town during the Vietnamese War, this is a story told by twelve-year-old Sandy Cason about the prejudice and violence that are latent and that emerge when a white woman is murdered. Black, bright, and quiet, Will Brown is innocent but frightened; he hides in a tree house and Sandy helps him when she finds him there. The book ends with a Klan gathering, and with the discovery that one of the Klansmen is the murderer. Engel uses the story to make a statement about race relations and KKK terrorism; while the situation is dramatic, the story is stretched and not always believable: for days, nobody suspects that Will’s in the tree house, the sheriff’s dogs miss the scent, nobody questions Sandy’s absences or misses the food and other things she takes to Will.

D.V. Interracial understanding


For no discernible reason, entries are by date through the calendar year, and they include many kinds of plays upon words (rhymes, stories, jokes, riddles, examples of erroneous use of words, rebuses, etc.), some of the material taken from the author’s earlier collections. Selections by other writers are identified; line drawings decorate some of the pages but seldom illustrate the neighboring material. This runs the range, as do most riddle or word play books, of quality; some selections are challenging or funny or informative, but many are slapstick or tedious.


Three short stories are linked because each focuses on a chiseled figure. “The Binnacle Boy” is a statue taken from a ship on which all had perished, and it is the repository of whispered secrets—but one secret is never found out, and the crew’s poisoner lives grimly on. In “St. Crispin’s Follower,” an awkward apprentice finally gets the attention of a girl with whom he’s been hopelessly smitten, and in “The Man of Influence” a sculptor is commissioned by a ghost to carve his likeness. The macabre tone is deftly maintained in the tales, which themselves have the combina-
tion of strength, mass, structure, and delicacy in portraying details that are the characteristics of graven images.


Large print and ample spacing facilitate reading ease in a book that describes, each within a slight narrative framework ("You are the pilot of a Concorde . . . Today you are flying 100 passengers 3,423 miles . . .") what the pilot or driver does when handling all sorts of vehicles, from an 18-wheel truck or a combine to a jet plane or a train. The subject and the photographs should interest many primary grades readers, the writing style is clear and direct, and the vocabulary is as simple as is consistent with accuracy.

C.U. Transportation (unit)


In a book that gives a good deal of information but is marred by haphazard arrangement of the whole text and of material within chapters, the color photographs (and some in black and white) add to appearance and appeal. Chapter headings are all Shakespearian phrases; subtitles give a better clue to contents. While the facts in the text, which is adequately written, are augmented by an appended section entitled "Mini-facts at a Glance" (lists of rulers, famous people, and prime ministers; general information about geography, everyday life, etc. and a list of important dates) so much information is packed in so disorganized a fashion, the book may confuse some readers. Also included are political and topographical maps, a list of cities and towns in England, and an index.

C.U. Social studies


A smooth retelling of the familiar folktale is handsomely illustrated by framed pictures, the ornamental borders combining small paintings and geometric print designs, the paintings within beautifully detailed and composed. Hyman's blending of sturdy shapes, misty flora, cozy interiors, and strong figure drawing is unified by her varied and expert handling of light and shadow.

C.U. Storytelling


A favorite Grimm story is smoothly translated and effectively illustrated in a small book for which the pictures are nicely scaled. Double-page spreads are alternately in black and white and in quiet earth colors, with a delicate line and economical draughtsmanship. The story of the sister whose love and loyalty redeemed her six brothers, changing them back from their swan shapes into six handsome youths, is as nice to read aloud or tell as it is to read alone.

C.U. Storytelling

D.V. Brothers—sisters
Tuck (Ann Tucker) thumbs a ride with a genial older couple who are on their way to a rodeo; Tuck is sixteen, an orphan running away from a state home so that she can achieve her dream of being a rodeo participant—although she’s never before ridden a horse. While the success she has seems too easily achieved (she sells a trophy buckle that is her one family memento and buys a horse; the kindly couple eventually become her legal foster parents; the book ends with Tuck winning a prize with the horse she has trained) this is a well-written story with an animated plot and competent characterization; it gives information about rodeos although it makes no critical statement about the violence that many animal lovers feel is an unfortunate aspect of rodeo exhibitions.


In the first of a fantasy-adventure quartet, the Emperor of the land of Galkis selects his third-born and best-loved son, Kerish-lo-Taan, for a crucial mission. As one of the ruling clan, the Godborn, Kerish must search for the seven keys of seven sorcerers to rescue ‘‘The Saviour.’’ Too young to go alone, Kerish is accompanied by his older half-brother Forollkin to the seven citadels of the sorcerers (if he can find where they are) and thus save Galkis from the enemies within and beyond its borders. The writing is filled with action, colored by strange names and intricate relationships, richly conceived; in this first volume are the first two adventures of Kerish, who wins two of the seven keys he seeks.


A fine collection of songs for young children, arranged primarily by origin (English traditional) but partly by form (rounds) or by season (Christmas, Hanukkah) or by function (singing games). Subject and title indexes give access to the selections, and both simple guitar chords and simple piano accompaniments are provided. Anita Lobel’s illustrations (double-page spreads alternate, full color, with black and white) are imaginatively adapted to the songs, sprightly, and inventively detailed. The use of illustrations on the pages is refreshingly varied.


Sarah, thirteen, is the narrator of a story about adjustment to death; the first person format gives the account a vivid, painful believability. She’s an only child, her mother, a lawyer, works at home and the two have a warm and mutually respectful relationship. Mom and Daddy are honest, telling their daughter that Mom’s illness has been diagnosed as cancer. Sarah goes through an expectable range of reactions, and her mother is loving, supportive, and understanding to the end—she dies on Christmas Eve. This is moving, but it’s not maudlin, although Mom’s fortitude and equanimity may be more exemplary than typical. The story moves smoothly, the characterization has consistency, the story line has little relief (one friend’s worry about her mother, who suffers from agoraphobia, and a dual gymnastic performance with that friend) and, in sum, the strengths of the book outweigh the minimal weaknesses.

D.V. Death, adjustment to; Mother-daughter relations

Softly detailed, brightly colored paintings that are reminiscent of the work of the Provensens illustrate a long, rhyming text that celebrates all kinds of cozy, happy things. There are cozy words, cozy foods, cozy sounds and smells, cozy things to do on a day when "... you wake up bright and early/In your roasty toastey bed..." And, at the end of the day, back to bed: "Droopy/Drifty/Drowsy/Dozy/Dream of everything that's cozy." Every child may not like every food or activity in the book, but all children will find some joys they share, and everyone can appreciate the lilt of the rhymes, the relish for words, and the pictures, busy but never cluttered.

D.V. Environmental concepts; Everyday life concepts


The realistic line and wash illustrations by a former winner of the Greenaway Award show chunky little Alfie busy with the small concerns that small children share; whether they wear shoes or go barefoot, they do like to splash through puddles and they do like to stamp about just to make noise. Here Alfie gets a pair of rubber boots, happily plays in them although they feel funny, and discovers—all by himself—that the left boot is on the right foot. Mom paints an "R" on one boot and an "L" on the other, but even after the paint wears off, Alfie knows right from left. An important lesson; a direct, unpretentious story.


Titch was always being told that he would grow into his brother's and sister's cast-off clothes; the garments were too small for Pete and Mary, but they were too big for Titch, and one day he was taken on a shopping trip for a new outfit. By that time there was a new baby in the family, and Titch announced that the baby could have his old clothes. Too big for an infant? "He'll soon grow into them," said Titch. The paintings of the family and their home are clean in line and color, minimally humorous and a shade cartoonish in drawing. The story is slight but gives a sense of the continuum of change and growth in a family; the writing is direct, with most of the brief text carried by dialogue.


Becky likes classical music, and Mark plays in a rock and roll band, although he also plays cello and is chosen to accompany Becky's soprano solo in a school concert. They fall in love, quarrel, and make up. That's the story line, and it's given some balance by minor plot threads that have to do with another admirer, Jimmy, and a new friend, Joan, and by Becky's resentment when her recently-bereaved mother starts dating. This has no egregious faults, but it's formulaic in structure and pedestrian in style.

D.V. Death, adjustment to


Randy, the narrator, is on a canoe trip with his parents and his cousin Morgan when the earthquake happens; the two boys then decide to investigate a cave that has been exposed. That proves to be the corridor to the future in a time-shift story that,
like many other science fiction tales, posits a civilization that is coping with the
disastrous results of wasting the world's resources. With two other children (of the
year 2027) they flee from the pursuing Greenies, the military troops that scour the
countryside for persons who have escaped from the regimented communities of an
almost-feudal society. The children are helped by another illegal roamer, a wise man
who helps to hide them and who eventually helps Randy and Morgan get back to their
own time. The story has plenty of action, an adequately conceived society, and some
suspense, but it is weakened by shallow characterization, a pedestrian writing style,
and an abrupt ending.

Trade ed. $9.95; Library ed. $9.89.

Neatly framed and softly tinted in pastel hues, Lobel's pigs indulge in extravagant
and nonsensical didoes as described in a series of limericks about pigs. Sample:

"There was a smart pig who was able / To make use of his three-legged table / He
accomplished this trick / Standing still as a stick / To be leg number four of that
table." These verses are lightly funny, variable in quality, sometimes bland, some-
times witty.

Louie, Ai-Ling. *Yeh-Shen: A Cinderella Story from China*; illus. by Ed Young. Philomel,

Probably older than the several European versions that are more familiar to
English-speaking children, this Cinderella story has some basic similarities: the or-
phaned slavey whose stepmother refuses to let her participate in a festival, the
magically-produced clothes, the hunt for a girl whose foot fits a slipper. Here the
magic comes from the bones of a fish that Yeh-Shen has loved and her stepmother
has killed, and here it is not at the festival that the king falls in love; a villager finds
the lost slipper and sells it to a merchant who gives it to the king, who then decides he
must find the woman who'd worn the tiny, precious slipper. The story is interesting
as a folklore variant, but it's also smoothly and simply retold, and the illustrations are
stunning: the artist's use of space and mass in composition is restrained and effective,
the lines are soft, the colors melting, often trailing off across the page with faintly-
seen details of design that echo the stronger use of design at the focus of the painting.

$8.95.

Fourteen-year-old Enid is bright, sophisticated, and articulate, a typical Lowry
child; she's lacking in self-esteem and bored by the prospect of a Boston summer.
That's before she begins taking care of a precocious and lovable four-year-old,
Joshua Warwick Cameron IV, who prefers to be called Tom Terrific, before she
meets the friendly black musician in the Public Garden, or the bag ladies, before she
discovers that that pest of a classmate, Seth, is really a very nice boy. And it all
comes together in a story that is touching, inventive, believable, and hilarious, as all
of the characters conspire to take a stealthy midnight ride on the Public Garden swan
boats and are caught by the police. Great fun, with a solid base of sharp characteriza-
tion and some pithy commentary on our society.

D.V. Boy-girl relations


Profusely illustrated with black and white marginal sketches, many full-page
paintings in color, and some small color paintings in a final section entitled "More
Ad Birds” that is alphabetically arranged (the birds in the body of the text are not so arranged) this is informative but not comprehensive. McGowen discusses the evolution of birds, anatomical features, behavior (nesting, care of young, and migration) and birds in the balance of nature. The writing style is adequate, the arrangement of the material within each chapter rather dense; the book is weakened by this compression of facts and by the occasional example of writing down to the reader: “Thus, no matter where you live . . . you’re almost always able to see birds . . . And that’s nice, isn’t it?” A pronunciation guide and an index are appended.

C.U. Nature study; Science


The narrator, Karen, is almost eleven, a steady and reliable adopted child whose veterinarian mother is loving and disorganized, so that Karen worries about what Mom will do when she’s left on her own when Karen leaves home. Now is the time, Karen decides, to scout around for the best husband for Mom. He must, of course, love animals; there are several other requirements on Karen’s list. Unfortunately, the very nice man who’s Karen’s choice isn’t her mother’s, and Karen finally realizes that Mom is quite capable of managing her life. Karen is thrilled when, at the close of the story, Mom announces she’s adopted another Korean girl; clearly the new sister is going to fill a niche in both their lives. A smoothly casual treatment of adoption and of cultural assimilation, this is written in a lively, informal style that has good dialogue, humor, and warmth.

D.V. Animals, kindness to; Mother-daughter relations


In Scotland with his stepfather, who is on a secret intelligence mission, Mark expects to be bored in the small village where he’s on his own most of the time, since his stepfather goes off without divulging his destination or assignment. Mark gets more and more deeply involved and more and more suspicious that one of the local people is the criminal he suspects is the quarry. The plot gets rather complex, with an abundance of red herring, coincidence, and contrivance adding weakness to a heavy-handed writing style. The setting may have interest for some readers, and the story has suspense and action that should appeal to most.

D.V. Stepfather-son relations


Olivia, the narrator, is almost ten and unhappily convinced that she’s less important than her parents (mother’s just had a promotion, Daddy’s just finished a novel) or her sister, a stellar achiever. Olivia yearns for a dog, but Daddy says that since he’s not earning money, they can’t afford one. Nevertheless, she puts her savings into a deposit on an expensive puppy; the only way she can earn enough for the balance is to get the reward for solving the mystery of a dognapping. When she does, the culprit proves to be an elderly friend—and Olivia has to choose between reporting him or pretending that the dog came back to its owner by itself—thereby losing the award and her last chance of getting the puppy. The plot is nicely balanced by warm relationships in a black family, by involvement with neighbors, and by Olivia’s friendship with Jeffrey, a classmate. The characters are well-rounded, the pace brisk, and the writing impressive for its natural flow and percipience.

D.V. Friendship values; Older-younger generations; Self-confidence

Because of his mother’s illness, ten-year-old Daniel is sent from London to stay with his great-aunt and uncle in his father’s boyhood village. His travels back in time are precipitated by the church bells, and in a series of journeys into the past, Daniel becomes familiar with the dreary lot of the chimney sweep and, in his compassion for one boy, Jim, who had been abducted into a villain’s service, offers to change places. This turns out to be a dangerous ploy, out of which Daniel emerges with a strong sense of the continuity of time and a feeling of kinship with his ancestors. The framing story is a bit contrived, and the book is used to a rather large extent as a vehicle for information about the unhappy lot of child sweeps, but it has historical interest, pathos, and some suspense; the characterization is facile, and the writing style intermittently florid.

C.U. Social studies


Decorated rather than illustrated, this collection comprises selections from earlier books and fifteen new poems that are beautifully carved, cameo-clear and delicate, small lyrics of the natural world. Although most of the material in the collection, which is divided by the titles of books from which the poems came, is easily available, it’s pleasant to have them gathered in this book, and the new poems are of the fine quality that Moore’s fans have come to expect.


Alphabetically arranged, this is a series of phrases accompanying brisk, bright illustrations, sometimes one to a page, sometimes four or five. There’s humor in some of the concepts, and some of the phrases are indeed tongue-twisters (“Squinting Squid seeing ship slowly sinking”) but other phrases are not at all in that category: “Yaks Yakking,” for example, or “Lions loving.”


The author describes the many and diverse jobs at a zoo (including some that really are not restricted to any institution, such as ticket-taking or serving food) and what kind of training they require; also discussed are what readers can do before formal training that may facilitate a career as a zoo director or a public relations coordinator. Salary ranges are cited; volunteer programs are described; a career glossary, a list of sources of further information, and a relative index are appended to a text that is informative if pedestrian in writing style.

C.U. Career guidance
D.V. Occupational orientation


In a sequel to *The Captive* and *The Feathered Serpent*, O’Dell continues the stirring story of the young Spanish seminarian, Julian Escobar, who had been ship-
wrecked in the New World and become a god/ruler to the Mayan people. As this fine historical novel starts, Escobar has escaped from a vengeful Cortes after the death of Montezuma. Now he is back in his city, on the island he hopes to defend against the ruthless Cortes, and he finds his people have a hostage, a bishop who is wearing the amethyst ring that shows his status. Escobar lets his people kill the bishop and thereafter wears his ring, an error he regrets when he is later hounded by the Spanish explorers. In the end, after many adventures, Escobar returns to Spain, refuses the chance of being wealthy, and joins the Brothers of the Poor. This is both an exciting adventure story of a man corrupted by power, and a vivid account of the conquistadores who ravaged an ancient civilization, and it is notable for its structure and characterization as well as for the research that colors but does not clog the narrative.


In this fourth story of an extended family in a Polish-American farming community in Wisconsin, Pellowski goes back to the first native-born generation. The book is set in 1876, and little Anna’s parents welcome each new family to the growing number of immigrants who, like them, have come from Poland. Anna hears so much talk about the old country that she dreams of going back until the adults explain to her that Poland, under Prussian occupation, is not like it had been in the old days. That dream is the one sustained thread of the story; otherwise, it is like the first three books: episodic, giving a good picture of farm life, Polish customs, and Catholic practices, but bland and rather self-conscious in the writing style.

C.U. Farm life (unit)
D.V. Family relations


Twelve years old, Jason and his infant brother Chad have been abandoned by their mother, whose alcoholism and abusive behavior have been two of the many indices to her deepening psychosis. She had already kept Jason home, secretly, for a year. When she leaves he is afraid to go out of the apartment and apprehensive about what the future holds for him and Chad, whom he adores. When he does go out and makes a friend, Brant, the latter offers a secluded tree house. Eventually, the kindness of Brant’s parents and the cold weather lead to a discovery of the true situation. Brant’s parents offer to adopt Jason and Chad, but it takes some time and a visit to Jason’s mother in a mental institution before Jason can accept the fact that his mother’s illness is permanent. This is an impressive first novel, strong in style and characterization, but stretched in pace: it is improbable that no adult (neighbor, school personnel, etc.) would realize that something was amiss, and it is improbable that Brant’s parents would be slow to recognize the oddity of Jason’s story.


Warren’s secret is that he cannot catch or throw a ball, a fact he has hidden from his older brother, a star athlete, and his parents, who are determined to send him to a baseball camp. His friend Lauren, who has a crush on Warren’s brother Roger, tries unsuccessfully to teach him, and the solution to his problem comes when Warren takes his first horseback riding lesson and breaks his arm. Nobody will know, now, that he can’t play ball! Unfortunately, the cast comes off just in time for Warren to be forced to participate in an all-school game. Fortunately (he feels) he breaks his arm
again the first time he fields a ball. This is a light-hearted story, at times self-
consciously cute but a pleasant read with a good balance of home and school ac-
tivities. The characterization is slight, the writing style variable in its fidelity to the
speech patterns of an eleven-year-old.

D.V. Brothers; Friendship values

Sachs, Marilyn. Beach Towels; illus. by Jim Spence. Dutton, 1982. 82-5056. ISBN 0-525-

In a series designed for the older reluctant reader, this story of a burgeoning
friendship between two adolescents who meet at a beach is written at a primary
grades level of difficulty. Lori is cheerful, noisy, plays her radio so loudly that it
annoys Phil, who prefers quiet and solitude. He's waiting for another girl, who makes
daily excuses, then flirts with other boys when she does come to the beach. Gradually
Lori and Phil talk about themselves: Phil is trying to decide whether to finish the last
year of high school or drop out; Lori, trying to forget the accident in which she was
driving and her mother was killed, is miserable although she was blameless. The
story, told almost entirely in dialogue, ends with the two planning a first date. This
doesn't have the impact or cohesion of the author's Bus Ride, an earlier book in the
same series, but it should appeal to teen-age readers, since it presents few reading
obstacles, has natural conversation, and incorporates many of the concerns shared
by most adolescents.

C.U. Remedial reading
D.V. Death, adjustment to; Friendship values


Rebecca is not enthralled by her new neighbor, even though she's been hoping
someone her age would move into the next apartment. Jason is interested in little but
plants, he has a rude mother who clearly frowns on the budding friendship, and he
cries easily and often. This is one time, at least, that her mother won't put Rebecca
into the book she's writing: a children's book author, Mom has irritated Rebecca in
the past by doing that, but the new book is a romance. Jason is not very romantic. Or
is he? Rebecca's feelings have changed by the end of the story, which is so light-
hearted that its exaggerations of character seem intentional. There's some variety
and a modicum of suspense provided by one mysterious element: where is Jason's
father and why is Jason's mother so upset by his absence, since there has been no
marital rift? Good style, good dialogue.

D.V. Boy-girl relations; Friendship values; Mother-son relations

Sandburg, Carl. Rainbows Are Made; comp. by Lee Bennett Hopkins; illus. by Fritz Eichen-

Carefully selected, this assemblage of Sandburg poems includes many that are not
often included in collections of his work intended for young readers. The poems have
been grouped in six sections: poems about people, about the night, about the sea,
about nature, about everyday objects, and about words and language. The quality of
the writing is matched by the strong, dramatic wood engravings, one for each section,
and is set off by the spacious format. Title and first line indexes are provided.


While on a seaside vacation, Tina and her younger brother Josh meet Harry, the
imperious son of a wealthy man whose new wife Harry ignores. He takes the other
two to an island his father owns, and Tina is upset when she learns that Harry's father plans to start a development on the lovely, lonely island. Harry is hurt while they are there one day, and Tina swims back after they lose the boat in a storm. At Tina's suggestion, Harry and his father make a deal: the island will be left intact if Harry will try to get along with his stepmother. This is adequately written, but it has little depth of characterization, and the plot, while believable, seems overextended and at times contrivedly padded.

D.V. Age-mate relations; Father-son relations; Stepparents, adjustment to


Good quality color photographs are carefully placed in relation to the text in a book that is more specialized than the title might indicate. Written with Selsam's usual succinct and lucid simplicity and accuracy, this describes the protective devices that help insects evade predators; with matching pictures to illustrate when possible, it discusses camouflage, protective coloration (the "signal" colors of the wasp and the imitative colors of more peaceful insects), foul taste, hostile behavior, and the color spots of some insects that look like the eyes of predators that feed on the birds that eat insects. The text is carefully written to avoid the concept of intention, and the book concludes with a clear explanation of the fact that protective devices enhance the survival record of a species.

C.U. Nature study; Science


Harsh, bright colors are used in stylized paintings that have a sense of design but little finesse; the pictures illustrate seven folktales. Many of the tales have familiar folktale patterns: the jealous brother who is greedy, the generous boy who is envied by the selfish one, the toad who turns into a prince—but the endings tend to be softened: "Nolbu was so touched by his brother's kindness and generosity that he at once became a good and humble man . . ." or, "The boys returned to their village and the selfish boy was so grateful that he never did another selfish thing as long as he lived." There are several "why" stories, and in the title story, that pattern is combined with a long narrative about a voracious tiger (something like the wolf in "Little Red Riding Hood") who has eaten the mother of the children who become the sun and the moon. Simply and adequately told, this should be useful for storytellers, although the pictures do not enhance the book.

C.U. Storytelling


Dana Small's first person narrative is funny, animated, often perceptive or precocious—just what readers of Sharmat's books for younger children might expect. However, it is formulaic in structure, dealing—as do so many young adult novels—with a crush on a handsome new boy in school, jealousy of the friend who picks him off, and realization, at the end of the story, that the boy isn't worth the bother or the damaged friendship.

D.V. Boy-girl relations

The poems in this book rhyme, they scan, they are illustrated by perky line drawings, but they do carry minatory messages, every one, and children may well find that a whole book of message about not eating junk food, never skipping breakfast, eating yogurt for your bones and spinach for your hair, and eating salad because it's so good for you gets just a bit boring. As verse, adequate; as advice, sensible; as a read-aloud book, tedious.


Living in a trailer with her shiftless, extravagant, yet lovable mother, Oriole, Summer (and her sister Sparrow, both illegitimate, children of two of the many men in their mother’s life) is working and saving, grimly determined to protect Sparrow and find a better life for both of them. Oriole is arrested along with the surly man she’s picked up, jailed on several counts (the man and others have been growing pot and are accused also of attempted manslaughter and resisting arrest) and Summer makes arrangements for her small sister to be taken in by a wealthy couple who love her. There’s much more here: Summer’s feelings about her father, a growing affection for a boy, a warm relationship with a teacher and his wife. All of it is smoothly knit together in a flowing narrative that is strengthened by the depth of characterization and the perceptive depiction of the relationship among the characters.

D.V. Mother-daughter relations; Responsibility; Sisters; Teacher-pupil relations


Kerry, poking about the deserted mansion on Hopper’s Lane, thought it might be a bit spooky—she never dreamed that it was being used as a drug drop, or that she might be endangered. Taken prisoner by Ax, the leader of three criminals, Kerry disappears. Her widowed mother is frantic; her friend Jeff, a police cadet, diligent in helping the police when they permit him to do so. Ax kills one of the men, and the second—Carl—knows that if he doesn’t get away with Kerry, Ax may well kill them too. The story shifts among several viewpoints, building suspense and tension until the denouement. The writing style is competent, the characters believable, the structure sturdy.


Dr. De Soto is a mouse, a dentist, and an inventive, canny creature. Although his sign says, "Cats & other dangerous animals not accepted for treatment," he is too kind to ignore the plea of a miserable fox. He does the extraction, but he finds a way to keep the fox from succumbing to the temptation of mouse for dinner. The bland style is a foil for the ridiculous situation, and the triumph of the smallest should appeal to children. Both in the text and the clever illustrations, there’s the added appeal of Steig’s ingenious ideas for dealing with size differential, as Dr. De Soto and his wife (who is his assistant) climb ladders to get to the mouths of larger (but not predatory) patients, or even get there via pulley and hoist.


An oversize book has a large full-color painting on every page, with a slightly plodding story that occupies about a sixth of the space on most pages. The story describes adjoining island communities: one is rigid, industrious, and headed for
disaster because of the rapacity of its ruler; the other is relaxed and democratic, enjoying the beauty of life. When the more technologically advanced island was hit by disaster, its survivors learned the value of their neighbors peaceful, tolerant, and cooperative life. This is a bit heavy in message as it is in style. The paintings are impressive, albeit somewhat repetitive, with stunning use of perspective, fine details, rich colors, and romantic composition.


Grandpa outdoes his own stellar performances of the past, when Mary Ann and Louie serve again as a happy captive audience for a tall and very funny tale. This time Grandpa spins a story about his boyhood hunt for an extra-large Easter egg to please the girl who lived next door. A magical journey, an amiable bear, a blizzard, a gaggle of sea monsters, and still Grandpa got home safely with his enormous egg from the Frammistan Mountains. To the delight of Louie and Mary Ann, the great big Easter egg still exists, in a deft ending to a story told with wit, pace, imagination, and affection. The illustrations, pastel confections, are just as comic and inventive as the text.

D.V. Grandparent-child relations


Jim had always felt that his father, coach of the high school football team on which he played, had been more critical of him than of other players. In fact, he felt resentment. Now he has learned that his father has cancer, he is torn between admiration for Dad's courage in keeping his regular routine, despair because they aren't close, grief at the imminence of death, and irritation because everyone at school so openly talks about Dad's dying. His ambivalence extends to other areas of his life, as he moves from love for a pretty, popular cheerleader to affection for the gangling newcomer Gus (Agnes) with her candid and sometimes caustic ways. The breach between father and son ends when they have a frank talk, and he remembers his father's words to his team. "You didn't lose. The damned clock ran out, that's all." The pace of the story lags as the author explores and develops relationships in lieu of plot; the character of Gus is credible, but not her actions or speech; despite both these weaknesses, the story has some value for the insight it gives into one kind of parent-child relationship and how the knowledge of death affects it.

D.V. Death, adjustment to; Father-son relations


A series of wordless short stories has sunny, comic illustrations with plenty of easy-to-follow action. There are three stories, and each is told via three or four framed pictures per page. The dog, who never walks on four legs and actually might as well be a child, gets into trouble in the first tale when he dirties a sheet drying in the sun and ends with the sheet over him as he tries to clean it. Next, he gets thoroughly, happily wet on a rainy day; last, he has a few problems with a red balloon.

“How boring it is here! Nothing exciting ever happens,” says one morose boy to another, in a minimal text that consists of similar dialogue. Using a device like that of Ellen Raskin’s in *Nothing Ever Happens on My Block*, the boys plod on, grumbling about their boredom, while behind them all sorts of strange things happen. At only one point do the dialogue and the pictures meet: the boys are wishing they could see a panther, one pops out from behind a tree and says, “But I’m a panther,” and the retort is, “I said wild panthers,” as the boys go obliviously on. The humor of the concept should appeal to the read-aloud audience, and the framed pictures, spacious in composition, softly colored, and wittily conceived, are so integrated with the text as to achieve the best counterpoint between the blandness of the words and the extravagance of the background events.


Kate, the narrator, has two problems. One is that spreading construction has meant less and less open space where she can ride her horse; the other is that her friend Shelby wants to buy the horse, now that she’s entering competitions. Kate is resentful, jealous, and upset because she has these feelings. She resolves her problem realistically, and even manages to take some pride in Shelby when she wins a blue ribbon riding Kate’s horse. This has a sturdy plot, although there are moments of contrivance, but it’s weakened by a very slow start.

D.V. Friendship values; Jealousy, overcoming


With opening and closing chapters that discuss the problems of conservation of wild creatures and of breeding endangered species, the book describes the work of seven men who, in the last century, have made substantial contributions toward the preservation and protection of wildlife. They include a farmer, a French priest, and an English duke; the seven comprise amateur naturalists and directors of zoos or wildlife trusts. The book is capably written, the subject is appealing, the many photographs add interest. A divided bibliography and a relative index are appended.


Like the first books in this series, *Ernest and Celestine* and *Bravo, Ernest and Celestine!* (reviewed in the May, 1982 issue) these sequels are illustrated with delicately-tinted drawings that have the liveliness of line and the humor that make Ernest Shepard’s work distinctive. The paintings are not imitative, however, and they capture to perfection a child’s mobile face, for Ernestine is more a child than a mouse; in these books all children are mice, all adults bears. The relationship between the protagonists is never made clear, although Ernest’s role is parental. In the first book, Ernestine sulks so much when a planned picnic day proves to be rainy that Ernest agrees to go out anyway. In the second book, Ernestine finds a photograph album that shows Ernest with many other children. When she complains to Ernest that there isn’t one picture of her, he explains that the children in the pictures are campers; they put on their best clothes and immediately go to a photographer’s
studio. Celestine gets over her jealousy and poses indefatigably. The stories, first published in Belgium, have a nice balance of brisk pace and gentle humor in their minimal texts, and the illustrations are deft in draughtsmanship and echo the affectionate tone of the writing.

D.V. Jealousy, overcoming


The time is 1894, the setting the home of Daniel Thiel, the protagonist Jean Wainwright. Jean has come to the house to work on the family papers of Mr. Thiel's wife, deceased, and although the work is interesting and the house comfortable, Jean's employer is stiff, remote, and at times almost hostile. An orphan, Jean is a serious and capable girl, almost thirteen, but she is still a child: she's lonely; she responds with pleasure to the friendliness of Thiel's brother-in-law despite the fact that the two men are enemies. Slowly, as she reads the Callender papers and sifts clues, Jean becomes aware that some momentous tragedy had occurred, and her perception leads her into danger that almost becomes another tragedy. This has strong characterization, a plot constructed with skill, good pace and suspense, and a smashing surprise ending.


The Pipkins are tiny, mole-like creatures who go on a picnic that is a series of small but not funny disasters; they have gone on a picnic to celebrate the spring but are caught in a snowstorm. Blindly digging, they tunnel up through a snowdrift but somehow fall down their own chimney. Cold and wet, they are happy to be home. The line drawings (black, white, and red) are often busy with detail, but have vigor and humor; the story is adequately constructed but written in pedestrian style and slight in concept.


A biologist writes crisply and sympathetically about the grizzly, using the experiences (without anthropomorphism) of a mother bear and her three cubs to illustrate the ways in which the grizzly mates, trains the young, survives, sleeps through the winter, etc. Weaver discusses the fact that the grizzly is an endangered species, and pleads with restraint for the preservation of this species. The material is logically arranged, the tone authoritative, the style smooth. An index is included.


In a science fiction novel set in the future, human beings have achieved immortality, except for those in the Earth colony of Renascence; here children with creative potential are educated, here they decide at sixteen whether to go on as a mortal or choose immortality, which means the end of creativity (one cause-and-effect relation that is not made clear convincingly). David chooses mortality so that he can be a composer; Liss, who is unaware that she is bearing his child, returns to her home planet, immortality, and a marriage of convenience with an older man, Kurt. It is Kurt who is the link with the other aspect of the book, the growing domination of people's minds by the evil, crafty Silvio. The two facets are competently knit together; the world Webb posits is believable; the writing has a good pace and flow; the one weakness is the discovery, suddenly, of the psychic power of the
doomed children who have Down's syndrome, and the way it is used, abruptly, to dispose of Silvio.


Written in a straightforward style that is enlivened by restrained wit, this is a lucid and informative book about the many problems that relate to individual countries and the international waters that surround them. Weiss discusses the vegetable, mineral, and animal resources of the sea, the possibilities for future development of these resources and the need to husband them; he describes such problems as pollution (oil spill, chemical wastes, etc.) and the question of responsibility for pollution, competition in the fishing industry, and other aspects of a broad and complicated topic. There are good historical background, good coverage, and lucid explanations in this useful and readable text. A full, divided bibliography and an index are provided.


In a rambling investigation of industrial plants, their products, obsolete structures in transportation, et cetera, Weitz treats most subjects at a superficial level, while devoting considerable attention to others: about one page of text for the chapter entitled "Viaducts and Trestles," but about seven or eight for "Bridges," which also contains many pages of diagrams. Many of the subjects are fascinating in themselves, but the appeal to readers may be lessened by intermittent passages of patronizing writing and also by the inadequacy or illegibility of some of the descriptive material for illustrations. An index is appended.


Five Wilde fairy tales have been abridged rather than adapted in the oversize volume: the title story, "The Selfish Giant," "The Nightingale and the Rose," "The Young King," and "The Happy Prince." The excisions have been made with care and do not change the flow of the language. The large pages are an ample showcase for Montresor's dramatic paintings in a romantic style that has touches of the grotesque, with soft, bright colors and stylized details, the compositions combining static figures and imaginative interpretation of the stories. Wilde's fairy stories are themselves stylized, often mystic, always opulently romantic, and more often bitter than sweet.


Wildsmith uses half-pages, in the style of John Goodall, to show changes of scene in this story of a boy who finds a large egg that proves to be a pelican and who makes a pet of the bird although it creates problems. The pelican likes fish and snatches them from fishing boats and frozen food counters—but is slow to learn how to catch fish from the river. It is useful, however, bringing groceries home in its beak and carrying lunch to the boy's father when he's working in the fields. Eventually the bird flies off to live with other pelicans, the punch line of the story being that it is disclosed that the bird, who's been referred to as "he" throughout the story, is a female. The text is adequate in structure, and the style is unexceptionable; it is, as is usually true
of Wildsmith’s books, the lavish and striking use of color in handsomely composed paintings that is impressive: the frozen food counter glows with magenta and royal blue, the landscape is effulgently vernal, the farmer’s clothes are dazzling: yellow shirt and boots, blue pants, red and green jacket.

D.V. Pets, care of


Uncle Terrible, an adult friend who’s terrifically nice, is Anatole’s host for a visit that begins realistically and turns into a fantasy that is intricate and is relentless in its pace. Although the compression of odd creatures, magic, danger, and dilemmas is almost cloying, this is inventive writing, often fluent and poetic, that may well appeal to addicts of the genre, especially since the boy hero displays both courage and ingenuity. What it lacks is a convincing blending of fantasy and realism.

D.V. Older-younger generations


Colorful watercolor paintings with decorative borders convey the sense of cozy affection that’s inherent in this sequel to A Chair for My Mother (reviewed in the December, 1982 issue). Rosa’s the narrator, and her story focuses on what special birthday present she’ll buy with the money from the jar of coins to which all the members of the family have contributed. Mama is a model of patience as Rosa repeatedly hovers on the verge of making a purchase and changes her mind—until she thinks of something that will really be special. This has, like the previous book, a simple structure and style, strong family relationships, and a marked sense of economic limitations.

D.V. Economic differences, understanding; Mother-daughter relations


Elaborate devices in Rube Goldberg style and simpler inventions that have one innovatory feature are included in a series of double-page spreads that focus on one area: exams, homework, or antibully inventions, for example. There’s a column of hard-to-read hand-printed text that consists of a numbered list of descriptors; the drawings have corresponding numbers. One exam invention is a pencil that gives historical information when it is sharpened (on the shavings) and a watch that converts to a fully-illustrated encyclopedia, and an automatic nail-biter, etc. Occasionally, as with the giant automatic pesterwheel, the whole spread is given over to one invention. The drawings are ingenious; the devices range from funny to tediously silly; the humor has a quick appeal, but it may as quickly pall.


Ten-year-old Tony Jones is the speaker in a photodocumentary in which he describes his practice sessions, performances, teachers, aspirations, and love of dancing and acting. He’s participated in many performances in Minneapolis, and the photographs show an engaging boy dancing with obvious delight. This is not unlike many similar books about children studying ballet; the casual style is believably that of a child of ten, but the text is weakened by poor organization of material.
To order any of the items listed below, please write directly to the publisher of the item, not to the BULLETIN of the Center for Children’s Books.


AWARDS

The Newbery Medal for 1983 went to Cynthia Voigt for Dicey’s Song (Atheneum) and the Newbery Honor Books were The Blue Sword by Robin McKinley (Greenwillow), Doctor De Soto by William Steig (Farrar), Graven Images by Paul Fleischman (Harper), Homesick: My Own Story by Jean Fritz (Putnam), and Sweet Whispers, Brother Rush by Virginia Hamilton (Philomel). The Caldecott Medal was awarded to Marcia Brown for her illustrations of Shadow, written by Blaise Cendrars (Scribner). Caldecott Honor Books were A Chair for My Mother, written and illustrated by Vera Williams (Greenwillow) and When I Was Young in the Mountains, illustrated by Diane Goode, written by Cynthia Rylant (Dutton).

The Laura Ingalls Wilder Medal was won by Maurice Sendak.

The Batchelder Award went to Lothrop, Lee & Shepard for the translation of Hiroshima No Pika, written and illustrated by Toshi Maruki.