PRODUCTION NOTE

University of Illinois at 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


Aaseng, a seasoned if not profound sports writer, has chosen eight major league teams (on admittedly flexible criteria) using a four-part test. Has a team clearly stood out from its rivals? Was the team consistent in its performance? Did they win when under pressure? Did they “earn their honors,” that is, not achieve victory by playing weaker teams? Aaseng's choices are discussed on the basis of individual athletes' performances as well as team records, and while all of the material is available elsewhere, it hasn’t been assembled in quite the same way, and the sweet nostalgia of names and games will appeal to most baseball buffs. ZS


Watercolor paintings with soft colors and soft line illustrate a story that is told simply and directly, with a good balance of exposition and dialogue. A happy day at the park draws to a close, and small Simon uses the stalling tactics known to all parents, as he asks for just one more this or that before they leave. At the end of a short train journey they reach a small town, and Dad wheels Simon through the twilight to the house where Mom is waiting. Only then is it made explicit that Dad and Mom are divorced, as Simon says goodbye to his father. Few American children will be likely to understand the significance of Dad's request for a “return ticket.” Subtly, this says volumes about paternal love, and the poignancy of the relationship is heightened by the cool restraint of Baum's treatment. ZS

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


Julie, the narrator, is sixteen and is concerned about whether she's ready for a sexual relationship, about the fact that she's learned (from her mother's diary) that her mother had a baby when she was sixteen and gave him up for adoption, and about her best friend's pregnancy and abortion. Julie and her mother reach an understanding about mutual trust and responsibility; Julie and Sam (who are not lovers) finally speak frankly about their feeling that now is not the time. Adequately written, but superficial in characterization and formulaic in plot, this has minimal value only because it concerns issues most adolescents consider important. ZS

D.V. Mother-daughter relations; Sex roles

It's a common enough fantasy: what would life be like if you won 2.5 million dollars in the lottery? For 18-year-old Mike, it seems like the solution to all his problems. He can go to art school, buy a new car, buy his parents a new car, and have plenty left over for the Mike Bronti Fund for worthy causes. Ha. Instead, Mike makes a mess: he gets mugged in Atlantic City, loses sixty grand to real estate fraud, and manages to alienate just about everybody with his reckless spending and general thoughtlessness. That money isn't everything is, of course, the theme here, and it's spelled out too loudly and too soon—we spend the last half of the book waiting impatiently for Mike to get the message. However, the hysteria of the situation and the anxious/exhilarated tone of Mike's narration are right on target, giving readers another message to ponder: one thing a suddenly won 2.5 million definitely makes you is nervous. RS

D.V. Generosity


An openly prescriptive text is relieved by its simple, smooth style of delivery in comic-strip format, with ridiculously funny green reptile children expressing their way through the vicissitudes of divorce. After a table of contents and glossary of relevant terms (readers are challenged to find the starred ones in the book) come 11 sections on some reasons why parents divorce, on likely repercussions and reactions, and on ways to deal with visitations, living in two homes, dealing with holidays, and adjusting to new developments such as parent dating, remarriage, and step-siblings. While the child's point of view is always respected and given sympathy, there are also reminders of the trials of single parents and suggestions on ways for children to help out. The cartoons are, for the most part, well designed and funny without poking fun; they extend the book to a wide age range of users, who will benefit from this discriminately light treatment of a serious subject. BH

D.V. Divorce, adjustment to


Four stories from Masai, Bushman, Angola, and Hausa traditions (exact sources are given in a concluding bibliography) are retold with an unerring sense of rhythm and rhyme that will lure those who feel insecure in storytelling to read these aloud at least. "Lion and the Ostrich Chicks" reveals how the king of beasts gets foiled at chicknapping by a clever mongoose. "Son of the Wind" relates the experience of young Nakati, who plays ball with the wind's son, named Whoorree-kuan-kuan Gwow-gwowboothish. "Jackal's Favorite Game" is a funny tale of hide and seek, in which Hare finally gets Jackal to promise not to "tackle and tickle" him any more. "The Foolish Boy" lauds the parents of a simpleton, who turns out better than anyone expected because when he makes mistakes, his parents "didn't get excited. / They didn't get upset. / They didn't howl or holler/ And they didn't throw a fit." Rich in narrative and emotional content, these stories will appeal to independent readers or younger listeners, for whom adults can relish rolling the words around their tongues while reading aloud. Bryan's black-and-white illustrations are scattered throughout the text, with occasional full-page art in red, gold, and black. His style of heavy, swirling lines is full of movement and sometimes touched with folk design motifs. A rich selection. BH

C.U. Storytelling
This introduction is brief, businesslike, informal, and informational with just a few quirky exceptions. The first chapter on the history of modeling, for instance, gives readable background on fashion magazines, the early use of photography, and modeling trends but includes this confusing sentence: "‘The earliest fashion photographs imitated portrait paintings but portrayed ‘living’ models like Cheryl Tiegs or Christie Brinkley’—bumping these two recent models considerably back in time. Other sections include information on various kinds of modeling, from on-camera to fitting and promotional work, and also give advice for prospective careerists. A list of reputable modeling agencies is included in the text; a glossary, limited bibliography, and index are appended. BH

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


Something for everyone. There are jokes and riddles for those who consider them the acme of humor, poems and stories or excerpts for those whose sense of humor is more subtle. Some of the material is in the public domain, much of it is by writers of proven popularity and/or eminence, from a Charles Schulz cartoon and an Amelia Bedelia story to Charles Dickens and Mark Twain. This should appeal from the introduction (“We know that no kid ever reads on introduction. So we’re just going to skip it.”) to the index. The format is spacious, and the many line drawings are deft and cheerful. It is to laugh. ZS

C.U. Reading aloud


A well-organized text and a generous selection of good color photographs (many underwater) and diagrams will make this especially useful for student reports on ocean resources. Starting with a fact list, the author discusses kelp’s economic importance, botanical and ecological functions, and harvesting, with most examples drawn from the kelp beds on the Pacific Coast of North America. There’s also information on ways in which weather changes and environmental imbalances affect the growth of healthy kelp beds, along with some futuristic plans for farming kelp in the fight against world hunger. One brief appendix suggests activities for children (several depend on proximity to Monterey Bay, and the last ends on a silly note—“Aren’t you glad you’re not a sea otter?”); another lists scientific names for the sea animals mentioned; the book concludes with a glossary, selected bibliography, and index. BH

C.U. Botany


Delicately detailed and shaded, paintings dominated by rose and blue reflect the romanticized fantasy of the story, which is weakened by a stilted writing style and a contrived, rather repetitive, story line. December sleeps for eleven months of the year but is busy in his own month; the North Wind sends him on visits to March, June, and October. This is a laborious way of introducing concepts of the seasons, and it does not fuse into a smooth story line. Capably translated, this was first published as Dezember und seine Freunde in West Germany. ZS

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Thirty popular stories and poems include selections from the Grimms, Jacobs, Asbjornsen, and Aesop, as well as by Hans Christian Anderson, Robert Louis Stevenson, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Edward Lear. Although these choices can be found in many other collections, this will be popular with parents who want a lavishly illustrated gathering of favorites, from "The Little Red Hen" to "Chicken Licken." The book design is handsome and spacious, the illustrations variously successful. DePaola is at his best in a light mode: the humor in the art for "The Fox and the Grape" and "The Emperor's New Clothes," for instance, enhances elements of both tales, while some of the fairy tales suffer from a farcical graphic interpretation, as in the pictures for "The Frog Prince," or from stock images like those in "Rapunzel." Add this to collections where other titles in the current trend of popularized illustrated anthologies of fairy and folktales have been widely circulated. BH

C.U. Reading Aloud

The author of the rollicking rhymes in May I Bring a Friend? turns her hand to quieter verse in a book of nine simple narrative poems about friendship. The first and longest chronicles a close friendship threatened by a newcomer. One of the best is a boy's rumination on friendship with bees, and the last ends the book on an ambiguous note of a girl's trying to decide whether to share her secret place with someone. At their best, these poems are crafted with inner rhyme and reversals of meaning that come as a surprise. At their worst, they are triply rhymed and mundane: "Stars are singing,/ Bells are ringing,/ Flowers are blooming,/ (No more glooming)." All of them, however, have the appeal of common childhood experiences plainly shared, and this is emphasized by the spare, black pen drawings that suggest everyday activities and stances on the part of the characters sketched in the poems. BH

D.V. Friendship values

A quick, slick introduction to preparing and delivering a talk suggests ways to select, organize, and present material. Detz is a practised speechmaker who has written an adult book on the subject, but she sometimes sounds like a cheerleader, a tone that's reflected in the book's format, which jumps around with lots of headlines and lists. There's more emphasis on technique than on content: two pages on "How to Figure Out What You Want to Say," for instance, and ten on "How to Figure Out What Your Audience Wants You to Say." On the other hand, there's enough helpful advice and anecdote to make the book worth reading, and some of it will help build confidence if not ideas. The section on concluding a speech is followed by information on audio-visual aids and an index. BH

C.U. Assemblies

Jan, who has her eleventh birthday in the course of the story, is the narrator of a realistic novel that fails to be believable, although it is often touching. Like so many books about children's love and sympathy for the aged, it poses a callousness on the part of the middle generation: Jan's mother is content to leave her grandmother (Jan's great-grandmother) in a nursing home where she is miserable and not receiving proper attention. It is
Jan who, with two of her peers and two high school boys who drive the community ambulance, forge signatures for Gram and another nursing home inmate, kidnap them with the knowledge of a staff member, and take them to a vacant house they have all worked to furnish and equip as a home for the two old people. It is only a matter of days before the situation is exposed, but the hard-hearted middle generation and the operator of the nursing home can see that in those few days the two oldsters have made a remarkable recovery. Adequately written, but lacking perspective, this is more tract than tale. ZS


Told with less restraint, this story of a lonely child who finds family love and learns both security and compassion could be a sentimental tearjerker. It isn’t; it’s a moving story that unfolds with momentum. Because twelve-year-old Cady doesn’t realize who Thea is (his aunt) or Mr. Lowell (his father) and because the author makes sure that readers do so realize, the book draws the reader in. Cady, motherless, has been moved from the home of one relative to another since infancy. His father, he had been told, had run off. When he is sent to stay with Thea, he is wary: who is she, why does she want him, will she want to keep him, will he want to stay? Slowly, as clues come to him, Cady understands that the reclusive Lowell is his father, still emotionally convalescent and not ready—at first—to accept a son and a sister whose love he can return. Eige has structured Cady’s story with empathetic nuance and peopled it with strong characters who are well-differentiated and well-defined. ZS

D.V. Aunt-nephew relations; Father-son relations; Self-confidence


The someone whom Patrice finds to love her in her sophomore year of high school is senior Lance Carter, and it is clear from the beginning, to everyone except Patrice, what he wants from her. Their only meetings take place in the car after school, and later, in her bedroom at home, where they make love while her mother is at work. Patrice fits into the stock pattern of lonely and gullible naif, abandoned by her father except for occasional letters, and neglected by her mother except for periodic criticism. The development is fairly realistic (though without any explicit, steamy scenes) until the ending. Patrice, pregnant and of course abandoned by Lance, has the baby and feels a first rush of love, which, the last page implies, will tide her over all the difficulties of a fifteen-year-old’s raising a child. This is, oddly, a “problem novel” with a fairy-tale ending, which is presented as happy but is in fact very sad. The vulnerable protagonist has perpetuated her situation as victim. BH

D.V. Boy-girl relations; Self-care


In a sequel to Bestiary Mountain (reviewed in the January 1986 issue) the characters, who have come from Luna to investigate the remains of Earth’s beings and their culture, are again lined up, power-hungry against altruists, in a fierce struggle. In this novel of the future there are sentient androids, (part human, part robot) and crossbreeds of animals and of animals with humans. There are sub-plots and scene shifts and advanced technology and divided loyalties and action galore. Forrester doesn’t do a bad job of knitting his busy segments together, but they do crowd the story, and the book ends (undoubtedly...

Five traditional tongue twisters get special treatment as Gackenbach sets them into large scenes of cartooned chaos. Children will especially enjoy Betty Botter's baking her batter into a loaf full of children and animals sticking out like so many squirming raisins. Adults may appreciate several spreads that seem to spoof Sendak, especially the crying baby (in "Moses Supposes") that smacks of *Outside Over There* (Sendak's noble German shepherd has been replaced with a bulldog of sorts); similarly, "A tutor who tooted a flute" sports a bust and portrait of musicians looking on. Children who can't read the one- to three-line per page text will enjoy hearing adults trip over these words aloud. Slim, but fun while it lasts. BH


Although the General was dead, the three elderly army veterans he'd taken in still lived in his roomy house, along with the housekeeper and her eleven-year-old son, Walter ("Butterfingers"), who is the narrator of a tale that is more amusing than credible. Evicted by the General's nephew (a poltroon of the first degree), the oldsters and Walter mount a campaign to find the will that they are sure exists and equally sure gives them the house. The last defense, facing a wrecking crew, is mounted by the old cronies, with strategy planned by Walter (sure-handed by now), and the discovery of the will and subsequent triumph of the good guys will surprise few readers. It will surely delight them. Not a consequential book, this is adequately written, absurdly structured, and satisfyingly concluded. ZS

D.V. Older-younger generations


In this alphabet book for the not-so-young, seven pigs build a tree house, from "A is for apples to eat in the morning, The perfect way to start a day of tree house building," to "Z is for ZZZZZZZZ. A time to dream about tomorrow." In each of the 26 black-and-white etchings, there are five cleverly hidden forms of the letter, one each of the preceding and next letters, and the seven pigs. The finding is rarely easy, and there is a key at the back of the book. Children will enjoy the game, and older ones, especially, will appreciate the Rube Goldberg contraptions the pigs use to build their house, and the frequently bizarre scenery and perspective. RS

C.U. Alphabet (unit)


A high school junior, an only child, Sandy Fishman is plump enough to be the despair of her nagging, whining, domineering mother. Dragged to an exercise class at a neighborhood center, Sandy wanders off into a class in belly dancing—and her whole life changes: she proves to have natural talent, and she falls in love with the drummer. To be with him, she asserts her independence and has a fight with her mother; in the end, Mom makes concessions, softened by the fact that Sam (the drummer) is a nice boy and is Jewish, and a college student, by the fact that Sandy and Sam are going to her high school prom, a
project Mom has been pushing and Sandy resisting, and by the fact that Sandy is hired to
dance at the Temple Sisterhood’s annual luncheon and is a smash hit. What Mom finds
out on the night of the Prom is that Sandy is going as an entertainer. This is believable as a
story of adolescent rebellion against maternal dominance, and it’s minimally informative
about belly dancing, but it’s a story with uneven pace and with a recurrent awkward
phoneticizing of Yiddish, which Sandy is learning from an elderly woman she’s met in the
course of doing volunteer work. The characterization is adequate in general and devastat-
ing in portraying Mom; the plot development is patterned. ZS

D.V. Parent-child relations; Self-confidence


In this well-intentioned collection (a companion to *Class Dismissed!*, reviewed in the
September, 1982 issue), Glenn has written 70 first-person poems, each attributed to a fic-
tional high school student, many accompanied by a photograph of the “poet.” (This may
cause confusion among some readers.) While the poems do speak to adolescent con-
cerns—school, romance, family, the future—they do so in the shallow and banal style of
lesser contributions to the school paper: “I know that people are/ Starving in Africa... But
I/ got my own problems... If I don’t get the car tonight,/ My social life is history./ The
world stinks.” That adolescents write like this is beyond dispute, but in reading, they
are certainly capable of greater sophistication than this collection offers. RS


A fifth book about Al (Alexandra) is again narrated by her best friend, who remains
nameless. Al, approaching her 14th, feels that she needs a new nickname. Maybe Zandi?

As in the earlier books, this is a witty account of the friendship, the family relationships,
and the young teen concerns of two lively and engaging characters. The narrative is con-
vincing as the product of a twelve-year-old, the style is yeasty, and the Manhattan back-
ground is used to stimulating effect. Strong characters, the two girls remain recognizable
as their earlier selves, and both develop and mature as time marches on. ZS

D.V. Friendship values

28p. $12.95.

In what is clearly a yearly ritual, Gabrielle and her mother take a train to the city so that
Gabrielle can be fitted for a new coat in Grampa’s tailoring shop. This time, though,
Gabrielle demands purple instead of the conservative navy blue that has always been
chosen for her. Mama says no, but while she is out shopping, Grampa creates a com-
promise, a reversible coat of navy and purple, reminding Mama on her return that she
once demanded (and got) a tangerine dress in her childhood. The loving family dynamics
are clearly reflected in the writing as Grandpa passes on his wisdom to Gabby (“Once in a
while it’s good to try something new”). The illustrations, however, project the relation-
ship even more strongly, as the two homely figures echo each other’s stances, positions,
and expressions. Appropriate in a story about fabric, there is much attention to texture
and pattern in the art, with clothing a palpable presence in all the figures and a focus of
contrast or coordination with the surroundings. A rich observation of childhood experi-
ence. BH

D.V. Grandfather-child relations

Hewett, Joan. *Motorcycle on Patrol: The Story of a Highway Officer*; photographs by Richard
A photo-documentary follows rookie patrolman Fermin Piol from a typical call for help at an accident on the California freeways through his specialized further training and new assignment in the motorcycle corps. The black-and-white photographs are action-packed, the text immediate if somewhat over-enthusiastic (there are no difficulties foreseen in the job). There is also a careful and laudable effort made to include a woman, Fermin's first partner, and multi-ethnic officers, including Fermin himself. This will serve dually as information on law enforcement careers and a hook for reluctant readers who can't resist motorcycles. BH

C.U. Vocational guidance
D.V. Occupational Orientation


A group of four stuffed animals, led by Bramwell Brown, determine to rescue their friend Old Bear from dusty obscurity in the attic where he has been stored. Their several schemes to pile up first blocks and then themselves to reach the nursery-ceiling trapdoor, fall flat, as do their plans to bounce on the bed and climb up a plant. Finally, they fly a toy airplane up, find Old Bear, and parachute back down again, a happily reunited toy family. Although the story is a bit trumped up, it does capture the spirit of naive but determined efforts that many young children show in their projects. The text's main function, however, is to support the delicately precise color-pencil art, which establishes a cozy world without getting too cutesy. Each of the characters retains its inanimate quality while managing some expressiveness as well. The separation theme will hold children's interest, while the art has satisfying aesthetic appeal. BH

D.V. Friendship values


Raccoon twins Arabella and Albert solve the mystery of who stole the eggs Mrs. Turtle deposited at Meadow Marsh Bank. After sneaking out at night disguised as the robbers—a vague plan at best—the twins pick up clues from a snake and two crows and conclude that it was the turtles themselves who staged a robbery to fool the crows, who annually eat the eggs. This has an element of suspense and some inviting illustrations set in easy-to-read format, but the plot is too farfetched and forced to be more than an exercise. BH

C.U. Reading, beginning


Fifth in a series of picture story books about a little mouse who studies ballet, this has the appeal of a theatrical setting, as Angelina is given a part in a "grown-ups' ballet." Her cute little cousin is also invited, and Angelina is jealous because Henry is given a line. In performance, he has stagefright, so Angelina improvises a cue to help him, and her quick wit is praised. Angelina is a fetching heroine and her story is nicely told and constructed. The soft pastel tints of the tidy, small-scale illustrations echo the gentle quality of the writing. ZS


While there is much sympathetic anecdotal material here—interviews with gay ministers, mothers, students in New York City's Harvey Milk school for gay teens—it is framed
NR 7-12 by theoretical considerations which are confused, contradictory, and inaccurate. For example, Holbrook states that homosexuality is completely genetic in origin, and that male homosexuals do not have XY chromosomes. The first assertion is widely disputed (a controversy the author doesn't mention); the second is not true. Her discussion of "homosexual citizens" in ancient Greece and Rome and differing "sexual life-styles" in ancient China, Persia, and Greece is anachronistic, imputing contemporary definitions and standards to very different societies. Holbrook speaks of the "nobility" of Roman homosexuality, but in the next chapter calls it "child abuse." (That's in the course of her apologia for St. Paul, whose "scant" references condemning homosexuality were, she claims, only part of a P.R. package.) The test for HTLV-3 does not "allow us to diagnose AIDS earlier"; it only indicates the presence of AIDS-fighting antibodies, as Holbrook herself says a few pages later. Her claim that the AIDS rate among Haitians "has plunged in recent years, perhaps because of better public health measures," is false; the rate plunged because initial statistics were found to be faulty. Attribution to sources is spotty, but there is a good list of organizations and materials for further reading. This is a case of a writer whose heart is in the right place, but whose fervor is not matched by her research.


The book's jacket states "Carrie has always been Daddy's girl. Now, her widowed father is dating his secretary..." Seventeen-year-old Carrie, the narrator, has been motherless most of her life and is used to being the only female in a household of four males. She resents the secretary, Lise, and she determines to do something to make her father focus on her. She chooses a boy who looks like trouble and begins to date him (necessitating some evasion in dealing with her steady boyfriend), and she wears attention-getting clothes to which she hopes Dad will object. It doesn't work. In this adequately written but fairly formulaic novel, Carrie learns that her deceitful games only get her into trouble; she has a breach with her boyfriend, it is mended, and she learns to accept Lise. Believable but not substantial. ZS

D.V. Father-daughter relations; Social behavior


There's a page devoted to each letter, with a text of variable length: at times, just a sentence like "u is for umbrellas," and at times several sentences about Lucy and Tom. The illustrations are vintage Hughes, deft of line, realistic, and imbued with humor and animation. As an alphabet book this is less successful, in part because the use of lower case to begin each page of text may be confusing when juxtaposed with the oversize, boldface capital next to it. Also, there is an occasional illustration that doesn't seem to fit, such as the very large, imposing building under "h is for homes and houses." ZS


Although the style and level of reading difficulty are appropriate for young independent readers, the format (half text, half pictures; the little squirrel on every page, even those that show a child) indicates that it is best used as a read-aloud book. Along with two others by the same author/illustrator team (How My Heart Works, How My Body Moves), this is one of an introductory science series first published in France. Text and illustrations are nicely synchronized, and the text is an admirable example of science writing for younger readers: the tone is simple and direct. Although safety warnings could be strengthened, the facts are accurate, and correct terminology is used. The
author has been discriminating in choosing relevant material and avoiding unnecessary
details. ZS
C.U.  Science


Paul is eighteen, and some of the problems he faces are due to the energy crisis of 1991; some are due to the fact that he has amnesia about his abusive father's death (Paul may have killed him), and some are due to his confusion about memories—or is it time travel—in which he is a soldier in the Civil War. Shy, brilliant at his work in the nation's biggest defense center, Paul is approached by the representatives of both sides in a giant power struggle. There's also a love interest, explicit and implicit social commentary, and a suggestion that (as in the title) some memories are genetically inherited. That this is not confusing but stunningly effective in its pace, action, and intricacy, is a testament to the capability of the authors. They achieve it by strong establishment and consistent development of characters, by a restrained infusion of suspense, and by the incorporation of issues and problems about which many adolescents are concerned. ZS

D.V.  Patriotism; Self-confidence


One of many books based on the game of hide and seek, this opens with a child talking to herself as she looks around her room. "I don't know where I left it. I'm sure I brought it home with me. I have to find it!" Part of the game is figuring out what "it" is, and listeners may find this a bit confusing since there are no clues. The closet is full of clothes; the cupboard, of toys; the bed holds a cat; the refrigerator, cold food; etc. Finally a friend comes to the door with the child's blanket, and all is well. The pages are sized differently according to the shape of what's being searched, a gimmick that Jonas incorporates gracefully into her compositions and page design. The child herself, however, is almost expressionless and the art sometimes static. Nevertheless, there's enough color and subject appeal to capture the intended audience. BH


The son of Irish parents who had emigrated to England, Keaney writes about his experiences as child and adolescent in a neighborhood where he was a misfit, therefore bullied. The author refers to the anecdotes as "stories," and although some of the segments are vivid, the book lacks that continuity that makes a smooth narrative. Some of the experiences common to adolescence are reflected here: the need for independence, the consequent struggle with parents, the exploration of a first boy-girl relationship, and changing attitudes toward adult tasks—but the authorial voice seems more adult and reminiscent than one with which readers can empathize. ZS

D.V.  Growing up


The watercolor pictures, soft and pastel, of farm scenes (chiefly the interior of a barn) are pleasant and the large print is spaciously placed and simply written for primary-grades readers—or for reading aloud. What's weak is the story; what's very weak is its ending. Nancy describes her puzzlement about a series of clues that indicate someone has been in
the barn. A hat, another time a ring. A sandwich Nancy leaves disappears. "Was it a
person, or was it some kind of monster or ghost?" Nancy realizes she'll never be certain.
The final double-page spread shows the loft in the barn, and flying in is a little green
dragon wearing the scarf Nancy had left one day. Thus the story stops just when it
promises to become interesting. ZS

Reviewed from galleys.

"God, I thought about sex a lot." And seventeen-year-old Walker's preoccupation is
not helped one bit when his mother announces that she has a new job, as an "exotic
dancer," and she starts "Tonight. The snake got sick and Eve can't do very much without
a snake." Walker is doubly mortified that his mother actually enjoys stripping, and he
works hard to make sure his new girlfriend Rachel does not discover the family secret.
There has been a slew of sentimental books and movies for teens about macho, horny
boys who, with the help of an understanding girlfriend, learn to stop hiding their feelings,
but this very funny novel never falls into that trap. Both tender feelings and exasperating
pig-headedness are generously distributed among all the characters here, and Koertge
honestly explores a range of sexuality, from Walker and best friend Sully's self-conscious
jokes about breasts, to beautifully vulnerable lovemaking between Walker and Rachel. RS
D.V. Boy-girl relations; Mother-son relations


This is an easy, breezy journey through the ancient and modern records of people treat-
ning themselves to cold sweets whenever possible. Krensky takes quantum leaps from class-
ical times to the middle ages to the contemporary scene without too much factual strain.
Readers will find out that Nero, among his other dubious accomplishments, sent runners
to the mountains for snow so he could serve dessert ices at his banquets. Catherine
de Medici never gained any popularity with the French after marrying Francis I's second
son, but her recipe for sherbet did. The first modern ice cream freezer was invented
by a woman who never got it patented and never received a penny of the enormous profits that
accrued from sale of the device. Although this may appear to be a trifling subject, "ice
cream consumption in the United States has risen to 800 million gallons a year." Since
many of those consumers are children, they might as well get a taste of interesting history
along with their cavities. BH
C.U. Food (unit)

*Ricky, Rocky, and Ringo on TV*. ISBN 0-517-56414-9. All books written and illus. by

Ricky, Rocky, and Ringo are, respectively, a rhino, racoon, and bird, but it takes much
diligent searching of overcrowded and frenetic pictures to figure this out. To one *Pizza*,
the three add two wheelbarrows full of tomato soup, three shovels filled with frankfurters,
etc. On the *Colorful Day* they hunt for a chameleon who keeps changing color. On *TV*
and *Go to the Moon* include some scientific and technical facts, but surrounded by
whimsy, so children may have trouble sorting fact from fiction. Kids will enjoy the wild
colors and slapstick adventures, but there are many better concept books available. RS
C.U. Colors (unit)

A thoughtful and carefully documented report focuses on teenagers but includes general background on the history, psychological explanations, philosophical questions, and social implications of suicide. Some of Langone's discussions are complex, as in his description of experiments that have probed the genetic, chemical, and physiological patterns among those prone to suicidal attempts. Langone occasionally asks questions and then leaves them dangling, or indulges in overstatement in his own text or in the selection of one of the many quotes (all footnoted and for the most part helpful) in the book. One chapter, for instance, ends with the words of Isaac Bashevis Singer, hardly an expert in suicide, who says "I have read scores of letters from suicides, but none of them ever told the truth." On balance, however, this is a thorough and careful study, with a good deal of attention paid to addressing the readers' possible reactions, and a strong concluding emphasis on suicidal signs and prevention measures. BH


Profusely illustrated by photographs, both color and black and white, this continuous text, broken by oversize topic headings (very large print, very bright blue; at times two headings on one page), gives the usual kudos to parents, the usual hyperbole about the subject, and the usual game sequences that mark most sports biographies that are published in series. There is information about Payton's career (very little about him as a person) and about the Chicago Bears, but the awkward writing style, the superficial coverage, and the lack of sources or index may limit readership despite the deserved popularity of a sports hero. A page of statistics is provided. ZS


This collection of 16 commissioned poems celebrates 11 holidays in the Jewish seasonal cycle, from Rosh Ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur to Tishah Be-Av and the perennial Sabbath. There is much traditional material incorporated into the poetry—biblical echoes and an entire passage from the Haggadah. Contemporary notes are often juxtaposed with these ancient tones: in Ruth Roston's "First Night of Hanukkah," two squabbling children resolve their fight over a dreidl; R. H. Marks' "Simhat Torah" is shaped like a circular dance; Richard J. Margolis has suggestions for "How to Get Through the Memorial Service." Bloom's full-page, black-and-white illustrations strike the same balance of old and new, with a striking portrait of a Hassidic father and son in one picture, a Chagallian collage in another, an Israeli agricultural scene in a third. Brief notes on the holidays would have been helpful to a general audience (public school teachers, for instance, who might want to use the poetry but don't know the time, meaning, or context of the occasions). Occasionally these verses are prosaic or even trite, as in J. Patrick Lewis' ditty, "Dreidl," but children and adults with the requisite background will appreciate the companionable tone and familiar imagery newly worked. BH C.U. Holidays


Intended as an easy-to-read book, this suffers the consequences of jerky prose, but McGovern does try to turn the repetition to rhythmic advantage once the story is underway. At any rate, the humor of a poor lad boiling a rock and fooling a stingy woman into adding vegetables to the water is irresistible, and the pictures, though oddly sinister in
color and expression, are skillfully drafted and composed. An audio-tape cassette is available with the book. BH

C.U. Reading, beginning


This adventure fantasy takes place in the future as the world rebuilds three thousand years after the "Fire from the Sky" and the "Winter of Death." Pre-nuclear civilization is referred to as the "Age of Magic," and the magician of the title, Armindor, is a sage who tries to recover artifacts and study their use. His apprentice is 12-year-old Tigg, a pickpocket whom Armindor has enlisted for his dangerous journey to the Wild Lands in search of magic objects (like the magnifying glass he always carries with him). The villain here is a demonic creature called the isst, a mutation, like most animals in the book, and a creature more than faintly reminiscent of Tolkien's Gollum. Indeed there are overtones of Lloyd Alexander's plots as well; but both those fantasists deal with the past, and McGowen's idea of having the heroes, including a loyal cat-like creature named Reepah, risk murder and mayhem for the deteriorated merchandise in what had been a gift shop for the personnel of an underground military installation, is ironic and intriguing. In spite of some occasionally stiff writing and stock secondary characters, this has the kind of action and setting that will hold youngsters' attention. BH

D.V. Loyalty


An outstanding example of science writing, this uses the common earthworm to teach observation, experimentation, and documentation. The writing is both informal and graceful, the facts are grounded in a context of scientific inquiry. Starting with a "guide to watching worms," the text includes questions to ask and diagrams to augment what cannot be seen through a magnifying glass. All experiments include precautions on the importance of respecting the creature being examined and avoiding actions that might cause it pain or shock. Sections on anatomy and characteristics pay special attention to principles of adaptation and lead into ecological background on food chains. The black-and-white drawings and diagrams are unpretentious but accurate and very helpful. This is a reading experience equivalent to a class with a first-rate, enthusiastic teacher; in fact, McLaughlin is an educator on the staff of The Franklin Institute Science Museum. BH

C.U. Biology


Lively paintings with humorous details, good use of color and composition, and a control of the play of light that is reminiscent of the work of Brinton Turkle are more impressive than the text they illustrate. The authors describe, in verse, a night-long dance in the barn, with music provided by the scarecrow's fiddle. All the characters are animals save for one child. That's the story, and balanced against the appeals of fantasy, animals, and the boy's nocturnal adventure are the fact that little happens and the fact that the text is on the cute side, occasionally faltering in rhyme and scansion: "'Ol' houn' dog, whinin' in his sleep/ Dreamin' after rabbits in a game of hide 'n seek." ZS

C.U. Farm life (unit)

Reviewed from galleys.

The narrator is Bunny (her real name, and she hates it), who is thirteen but looks older; she is happy in the love of her family, the lively grandmother in Toronto she visits each year, and her close friend Emily. It's because Emily doesn't want to go to a concert that Bunny is alone when she meets James. He's eighteen and clearly thinks Bunny is older than thirteen. He also thinks she's named Emily (she's lied about it), which causes some confusion when she telephones. Eventually Bunny tells James her age—but she finds it just as hard to tell Emily she used her name. It's a plot development that's capably handled but that doesn't quite mesh with a second plot about Grandma's having a stroke and coming to live with the family, a change that Bunny adjusts to with difficulty. While not as strong structurally as some of Mazer's earlier books, this shows the same capability in firm character delineation and is written with a good flow and a good ear for dialogue.

D.V. Boy-girl relations; Grandparent-child relations


Pedestrian in plot, structure, and quality of dialogue, these two collections of one-act plays are nevertheless useful for classroom production or school assemblies. The titles are often indicative of the coy treatment: "The Return of Bobby Shafto," "The Mouse That Soared," "Squeaknibble's Christmas," "The Magic Carpet Sweeper." Names are used the same way: Lord Scrub-A-Dub, Mr. Strudel the Baker, a circus owner named Darnum (Darnum and Daily Circus). There are types, but no characterization; there's a sugar coating to almost everything. The holiday plays are for the school year, from Halloween to Mother's Day. A few of the plays have two scenes. In each book production notes are appended, with playing time noted. ZS

C.U. Assemblies; Holidays


When Jenny's parents leave on a business trip to Korea, they send her to a relative's newly purchased house in Wyoming for the summer. The bait is a horse someone abandoned in a barn on the property, and although Jenny is better about having to leave home just when she was to start jumping lessons, she determines to save the broken-down old nag that she names Farfalla. In formula fashion, Farfalla turns out to be young and beautiful once she has been saved from a near-fatal case of worms and colic, but she also turns out to have been a stolen horse, and Jenny must face the previous owner and the possibility of giving up the animal she has come to love. There's nothing new here, but the plot will be a comfortable one for horse lovers, and the characterization of Jenny and the family with whom she lives is solid. BH

D.V. Animals, kindness to


A fictionalized nature narrative follows the growth of two bear cubs from their first days in the cave, through their mischievous explorations outside and lessons in food-gathering and self-protection, to their departure for independent new territories. This is a subject often covered, and it is somewhat marred here by the anthropomorphism in the cubs' dialogue. However, the black pen drawings are well drafted and the format attrac-

This is in the same format as other books in the publisher’s series of sports biographies: short topics, large-type headings, continuous text, no citation of sources, one page carrying the subject’s professional record. This is a bit less adulatory than the book on Walter Payton, above (by Leder), but it is written in an equally pedestrian style. There’s a bit about Gooden’s childhood and his baseball heroes, very little about him as a person, and a good deal about the stages and accomplishments of his meteoric career. ZS


A pediatrician and psychiatrist, Nickman uses a series of anecdotes as bases for discussions of different aspects of children’s coping with divorce and of different kinds of separation situations. Much of the advice he gives is available in other books designed to help boys and girls through difficult situations and to assuage their worry or guilt. Not many other books strike such a good balance between candor and reassurance. The text is specific, addressing such topics as dealing with stepparents and their children, or the child’s role and rights if there’s a custody battle. Best of all, the text is always child-focused—but calmly so. An index is included. ZS

D.V. Parent-child relations; Self-control; Self-reliance; Stepparents, adjustment to


Folk art in the naive tradition records the delights of a farm family’s anticipation and enjoyment of an annual event, the travelling circus. The first-person text describes the preparations, the journey, the crisis of flooded land surmounted, a family picnic, and the fun of the circus parade. Finally come the myriad wonders of the big tent, and a buggy-ride home in the quiet night. The stylized details (trees, hill) and flattened perspective are interesting, but may be less comprehensible to children than to adults, although both should enjoy the vitality and color of the circus scenes. ZS

C.U. Farm life (unit)


An evocative description of the creatures, wild and tame, that shelter through the bitter cold of winter in an old New England barn. Mice, a snake, woodchucks, porcupines, a skunk, cats, and a raccoon share with larger barnyard animals whatever space, warmth, food, and protection are available, sometimes in cracks deep within the stone foundation. Although vivid, the text is sometimes overwritten, and there is no tension to sustain it; indeed, several mystic references imply that the creatures suspend their aggression during this period of peace (it’s hard to believe a cat wouldn’t eat a mouse in any weather). The illustrations, too, have a still-life quality; their precise drafting and spacious composition underscore the brittle quiet of intense cold. A wintry mood piece. BH


Tom was a frequent visitor to the gravestone, six months old, that marked the remains
of his best friend, Dick, who had died of a brain tumor at the age of twelve. The realistic, somber beginning of the story gives no indication that it is going to move to theological fantasy, for Tom runs into Dick, not a wraith but a lively corporeal boy full of mischief and energy, as he always had been. Sometimes he lives in a fifth-dimension duplicate of their small town, as does everyone else who died there. In fact, Tom goes to visit him and is spotted by another (dead) ex-resident. Dick tries to persuade Tom to stay, but Tom opts for home and longevity. What weakens the story is the blithe tone of the dialogue and exposition in Dick's life-after-death milieu, almost an air of Oh-boy-is-it-fun-to-be-dead. No majesty, no mystery. ZS


A two-column format is used, with occasional facing fold-out pages, to accommodate the large-scale illustrations on oversize pages. All of the paintings are consistent in scale and include two human figures (jogging or swimming) to make the scale of large life forms easier to assess. Save for the fact that like creatures are informally grouped, there is no textual division; classification and scientific names are provided for each creature, as are facts about appearance, habits, and habitat. A glossary, index, and evolutionary time chart are provided, making the material in an informative if not unusual book more accessible. ZS


Two folktales, the first French and the second Irish, have been retold with lilting rhythms and illustrations produced from hand-painted lantern slides exhibited in 1891. Draketail is the freshest and funniest; with its rhythmic refrain of "Quack! Quack! Quack! When shall I get my money back," it makes a wonderful companion to other folktales with the similar motif of a character's confounding foes by swallowing and then disgorging a series of helpers. The illustrations, in a round frame against aqua-speckled backgrounds, are richly naive. The Irish tale is more sophisticated in language and art. It tells of the farmer's son who rides with the fairies to rescue a princess from marriage to a man she doesn't love. Its graphic style here is somewhat more stilted, though the language is lyrical. Old-fashioned figures in light frames against a blue background contribute to a picture book with slightly older appeal overall. BH


An oversize book with broken-page format (from one to three columns, with varied typefaces, and with blocks of peach background or spread illustrations) answers some of the questions that have been most frequently asked of its author, a member of the teaching staff of the Natural Museum in London. The information given in answer to each question is accurate, the style dry, the organization haphazard. Since both the table of contents and the index refer to page numbers, there seems no purpose to the use of sequential numbers in the book's margins. Format and coverage militate against use the book as a reference source, although it can answer some questions and may appeal as a browsing book. ZS

C.U. Nature study; Science
"Etiquette provides a bridge between you and your parents, you and your friends, and between your childhood and your adulthood." This comprehensive guide to good manners for teens provides a nice, if faintly nostalgic, balance to all the books that encourage one to "get it all out." Post and Coles discuss the etiquette of many situations, including introductions, dining, dating, rock concerts, and correspondence—even love letters: "If in doubt about how your letter might sound, keep it overnight and read it once more before you mail it." Their advice is sensible, including the "whys" of certain etiquette and customs, and is clearly illustrated with examples of "dos" and—always more entertaining—"don'ts." The tone is maternally benign, but not patronizing, and the authors seem wholeheartedly sincere, if sometimes bewildered, in their attempt to mesh peacefully the social needs of adolescents with those of the civilized world. RS


More than 200 verses cover every conceivable aspect of child life in this oversize picture-book poetry collection. Almost all the selections are bouncy, with popular names like Dennis Lee, Clyde Watson, Gwendolyn Brooks, Karla Kuskin, William Cole, and Prelutsky himself featured generously. The poems are clustered around a subject—the beach, birthdays, cats, etc.—but they are not rigidly forced into categories. The art is in full color and full of fun. Brown's double-spread page designs incorporate the text with fluidity and humor, often creating story scenes around a theme, as in the snowball fight and skating/sledding activities with which he surrounds Sendak's "January," McCord's "Snowman," Kuskin's "Snow," and others on the page. There's something to everyone's taste here, from Lewis Carroll's "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Bat" to Jane Taylor's "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Bat" to Taylor's "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star." Parents and teachers who want to pick out even a page or two per day will find range and contrast, as in the nighttime page including Beatrice Schenk de Regniers' lyrical "Night Comes," Marchette Chute's "Sleeping Outdoors," and Elizabeth Madox Roberts' "Firefly." Contemporary nursery rhymes for all seasons. BH


The facts of Andrew Jackson's life get a myth-perpetuating treatment here in both text and illustration. An example of the former appears in the epilogue: "He literally fought his way to the White House and plunged into the Presidency with both fists swinging." The picture that illustrates Jackson's problem with the "many-headed monster called the Second Bank of the United States" shows the President with a shield and sword hacking away at a hydra. This mystique, plus the silly cartoons of two children and a parrot that clutter up the pages, make the biography one of the less successful in Quackenbush's series. Although he is careful to include information on Jackson's terrible temper, impetuous decisions, and fiscal instability, it is clear that the subject's stormy personality and career don't quite fit into Quackenbush's jolly format. BH


First published in England, a brief treatment of the subject is geared for the middle
grades, with large print and bright color photographs. The text is accurate but occasionally uses words that are not defined in phrases that are awkward. Rickard gives some background about automata of earlier centuries, defines a robot and points out the differences between the first generation robots and the more "intelligent" robots of the second generation of manufactured machines that perform tasks hitherto achieved only by human beings. The book concludes with a discussion of robots of the future. The author includes references to the limitations of robots and to the dilemma raised by their incursion into the labor market. A glossary, an index, and a reading list are provided. ZS


In subtly rhythmic prose, Sanfield recalls the legend of John Henry, from childhood (33 pounds at birth, with a voice that raised the roof) through his various youthful feats, to his work as a steel driver on the railroads. The final scene of John Henry racing the steam drill to his death is well focused and moving, with a momentum punctuated by sound effects: "chugga-chugga-chugga-chugga" for the machine, "Take this hammer (Wham!)/ Carry it to the Captain (Wham!)" for the man. Music for the song, along with 12 of its many verses, is included at the end of the book, which is beautifully designed with handsome typeface and a thin frame around each page of text and each full-page picture. The illustrations are softly textured pencil drawings with refined shading and contrast. The black hero is larger than life, yet humanly expressive in context of the ordinary folk surrounding him. In both art and narrative, this is a durable edition worthy of the folk tradition it reflects. BH

C.U. Reading aloud


Volatile, theatrical, and unorthodox in his teaching methods, Mr. Conner had confided in Julie, helped her improve her writing and her college applications, and trusted her enough to suggest a game. The game, a classroom psychodrama in which she is to follow his lead and trust him, proves to be a confrontation that gets Julie into trouble with the school authorities but wins the support of her classmates. She becomes angry with Conner, but he tells her a long, long story about his awful experiences in Vietnam and she decides to trust him again. The character of Conner remains as unconvincing as the development of the game, and while there is some drama and some suspense, this is so laboriously written that it sags more than it lifts, especially when the writing becomes as padded as, "His soothing, resonant voice and poised demeanor made people like Julie forget about his myopic red eyes, big ears, uncontrollably stiff brown hair, and relative chinlessness." ZS

D.V. Teacher-pupil relations


Although there's a good deal of adult satire here, Seidler's story is nevertheless a well-paced adventure that will hook young readers into his meticulously created rodent world on New York's deserted wharves. In fact, the wharves are deserted because the rats pay off the deadbeat owner with a barrelful of money—$50,000 annually in scrounged nickels and dimes. When this doesn't prove enough to keep his heir from strewing rat poison around, a talented young rat named Montague sells off his miniature shell paintings for a fortune, winning the heart of his girl friend and a place of honor in the rat community, which has always spurned his artistic family (father makes sand castles; mother, hats; and uncle, rings; all work obsessively). Seidler has always had a notable style, but this is the first time his plot structure and character development have come together with such cred-
ibility, and his light word play and punning augment the story without interrupting its flow. The book is beautifully designed and illustrated with smoothly modulated pencil drawings. An ideal follow-up to *Abel's Island* by William Steig. BH

D.V. Creativity


A warm but meandering story spiced with occasionally sentimental aphorisms ("And friendship, like a frail tree, grew between them") recounts the meeting of young mouse Tucker and kittenish Harry, close companions in *The Cricket in Times Square*. Here, Tucker chooses a name for himself, inspired by a bakery sign, and stumbles into Harry, who, much to Tucker's surprise, offers him something to eat instead of offering to eat him. The two then explore the basement of the Empire State Building and spend a miserable night on a decaying pier before finding the shelter of a subway hole in Times Square. Even this, they must protect from invading rats before establishing it as their permanent home. Although the story itself lacks the cohesive momentum of Selden's other work, there's humor in the characters and flavor in the New York setting. Fans will be glad to catch up on the backgrounds of these two fabled friends. Garth Williams' pen-and-ink drawings have the dual appeals of familiar style and vigorous line work. BH

D.V. Friendship values


Maybe other girls in the ninth grade are willing to make out, but Marceline, Jason tells us, is her own woman. She believes in a hands-off policy, and she believes in doing her own thing without being concerned about conformity or popularity. There are misunderstandings, a breach, dates with others, and rapprochements; all of this is treated in light fashion, with a certain amount of repetition in the focus of Jason and other boys on sexual stirrings and prowess. All ends on a sunny note, concluding a story that's mildly amusing, believable but not substantial, and just a bit overdone in the use of teen-talk: "‘mones’ for ‘hormones,’” or ‘rettes’ for cigarettes,” and a tedious variety of slang words for the girls' breasts. ZS

D.V. Boy-girl relations; Sex roles


Stevens' oversize watercolor paintings provide jovial accompaniment to an adaptation of Goldilocks that's a bit choppy and substitutes Goldilocks' own resolve never "‘to wander alone in the forest again’" for the traditional ending of her mother's admonition. The bears here are the stars of the show; they're expressively drawn and much more interesting than Goldilocks, whose mischievous nature is mainly evinced in the rocking-chair scene. Some of the pages—the first several especially—are striking in color and composition; a few of the later spreads appear somewhat diffuse, with too many patterns and shades for a concentrated focus. Overall, however, this offers a lively alternative to editions by Linda Bryan Cauley, Bernadette Watts, and others. BH


Three child detectives, one of whom is the narrator, are convinced that a visiting actor, Bela Mezgar, is a vampire. (Mezgar is from Romania, has been asked to play the part of Count Dracula because he is a guest lecturer at a nearby college, and proves in the end to be seeking political asylum). There's a lot of small-scale action here, but no suspense, since the author has not created a believable situation, either in the credulity of his three...
protagonists or in the contrivance of their investigation (and the fact that their investigations are seldom observed and not hampered) or in the various coincidences that provide false clues or pat answers. ZS


"In New York there are lots of bookstores, not just Scribners, and lots of delicatessens besides Gristede's. In Meterboro there is no bookstore and no delicatessen and, until my mother finishes these pictures she came down here to draw, no allowance." Hot on the heels of a disastrous third grade, Sarah finds herself in Kentucky with her mother, who goes there to draw pictures, or think about her marriage, or both. While Sarah's most pressing immediate concern is cash flow, (which gets her and new best friend Annette into some messes), she also worries about when—and if—they will return to New York. Readers will worry, too: Sarah's mother is not the sort that inspires confidence; immersed in her work, she's rather uninterested in her daughter, until Sarah sends some of her mother's drawings to several publishers. No luck here, but they do rejoin Dad in New York, where the three will take off for Paris. While it's a happy ending (not a resolution, really) and the book has many funny moments, the overall effect seems (unintentionally) sad—two of Sarah's teachers verge on the sadistic, and why no allowance, when Dad is a famous dress designer? Sarah herself is more cynical than any fourth grader has a right to be, even by New York standards. RS


A neat, succinct summary of the history and issues of censorship, with examples drawn from landmark cases of conflict over intellectual freedom. Although this does not pretend to delve into the subtleties of press versus national interest, control over education, or social versus aesthetic judgments of art and literature, it does outline the conflicts clearly. Thus, it is an excellent starting point for students who need background for more specific treatments such as Melvyn Zerman's *Taking on the Press*. BH


An excellent example of good informational writing and organization, this text moves from the general to the specific, is written with clarity and accuracy, and gives good coverage to the topic. Tiger does not oversimplify nor does he write down to the reader. Diagrams that are adequately labelled and captioned extend the text, which describes the several kinds of arthritis, explaining the cause of each and discussing symptoms and treatment. A glossary and an index are appended. ZS


"'STOP!' yelled a tiny voice. 'Wait! Hold the phone!'" Lily and Willy are just about to tell a phone caller that they are home alone when Ringalina, the telephone fairy, flies in the window. She teaches the two telephone etiquette, from how to deal with strangers and "words that don't sound nice" to remembering always to take messages and never to use the phone in the tub. This little book delivers some useful information with humor, and Knight's cartoon style paintings, though sometimes cutesy, will appeal to kids. Ringalina gets refreshingly frazzled—after scolding Willy for all those long distance calls to Santa, she's off in a hurry: "Little Jennifer Twerdly down the street is calling Dial-a-Koala in Australia." RS
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