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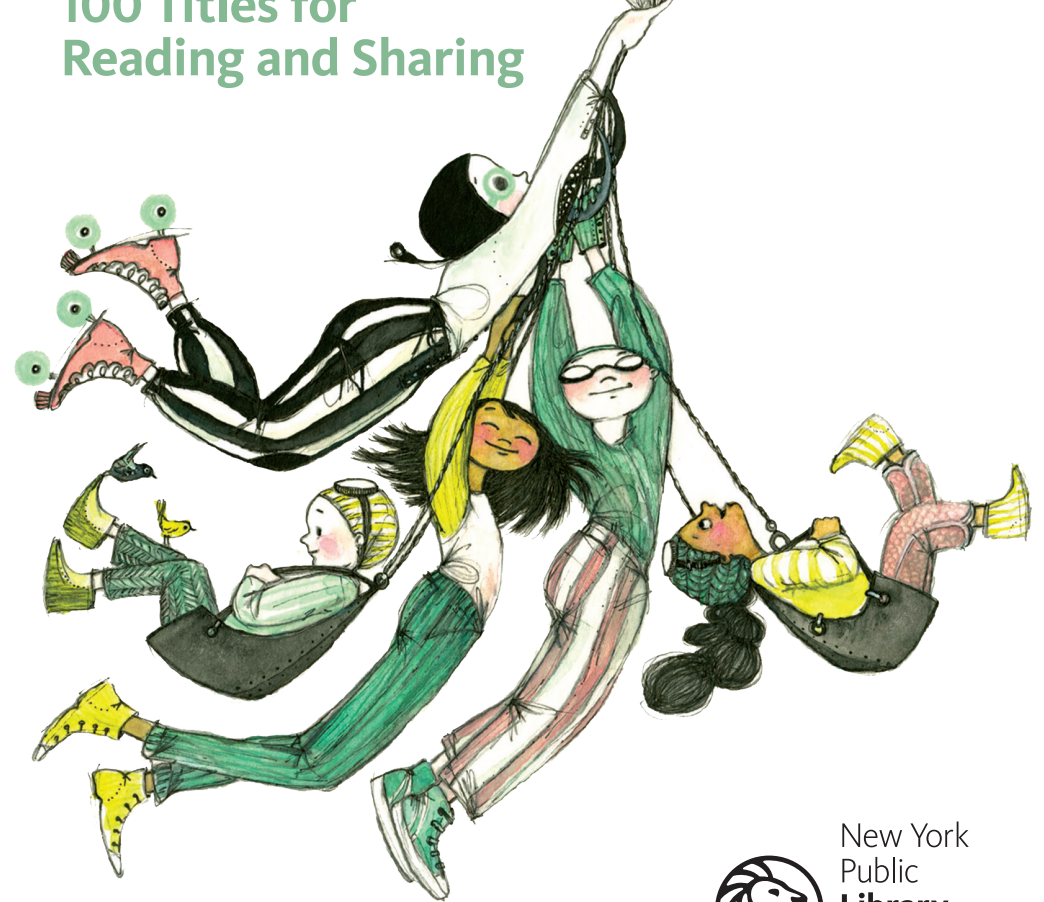
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The New York Public Library

# BEST BOOKS FOR KIDS 2017

## 100 Titles for Reading and Sharing



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# Introduction

Welcome to the 2017 edition of The New York Public Library's *Best Books for Kids: 100 Titles for Reading and Sharing*. Each year, our expert librarians read thousands of newly published children's books and choose their favorites for you and your family to enjoy. Among this year's selection of new and noteworthy titles, readers of all ages will find a vast array of stories that are sure to kindle their curiosity, ignite their imaginations, and stir their sense of wonder.

For more than a century, this list has sought to reflect the vibrant diversity of New York City's readership. In these books, you'll go deep into the forest and down into the ocean. You'll travel to another city or time and see the world through the eyes of another. From tales of faith and friendship to stories of strength and resilience, these books are sure to inspire you.

Parents, caregivers, librarians, and teachers all play a critical role in helping a child grow into a confident reader. Here are a few tips to get started:

**Make reading part of your family's regular routine.** Nightly bedtime stories work well for many families, but any time of day is good. It's never too early to start, and never too late to encourage your child to pick up the habit!

**Talk about what you are reading.** Whether your child is reading independently or together with you, discussing and retelling stories helps deepen understanding, improve reading skills, and build vocabulary.

**Let your child catch you reading!** Keep books, newspapers, and magazines at home and demonstrate your own love for the written word.

The New York Public Library's *Best Books for Kids 2017: 100 Titles for Reading and Sharing* is published by:

**Committee:** Jessica Agudelo, Rosa Caballero-Li, Jessica Cline, Jay Garfinkel, Ruth Guerrier-Pierre, Rachel Hanig, Tiffany James, Leah Labrecque, Ellen MacInnis, Mariel Matthews, Jenny Rosenoff, Abilene Selvon-Castillo, Rachel Skinner-O'Neill, Emily Small, Tara Thomas

**Co-Chairs:** Theresa Panza & Sue Yee

**Advisers:** BookOps & Readers Services



*"Darn, darn, and more darn. Where's my mitten? I don't see it anywhere."*

**Cover artwork:** THE BOOK OF MISTAKES © 2017 by Corinna Luyken. Used by permission of Dial Books for Young Readers, New York, NY. All rights reserved.

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# Picture Books

**After the Fall (How Humpty Dumpty Got Back Up Again)** by Dan Santat. After his great fall, will Humpty Dumpty find the courage to climb to new heights?

**Baby Goes to Market** by Atinuke; illustrated by Angela Brooksbank. Vendors in a Nigerian market share all sorts of snacks with Baby in this playful counting story with bright and cheerful drawings.

**Big Cat, Little Cat** by Elisha Cooper. A minimalist illustration style and simple text add poetry to this sweet story about the circle of life.

**The Book of Mistakes** by Corinna Luyken. With pencil, ink, and watercolors, errors become magical moments of opportunity to let your imagination soar in this uplifting tale full of wonderful picture-play.

**A Different Pond** by Bao Phi; illustrated by Thi Bui. The bond between past and present is reinforced in this nostalgic look at an immigrant father and son who take a pre-dawn fishing trip to feed their family.



*“Know you are phenomenal.”*

— “MAJESTIC” by Kwame Alexander, from *OUT OF WONDER*

**The Five Forms** by Barbara McClintock. Magical chaos is created when a young girl discovers a mysterious book of martial arts poses.

**Flashlight Night** by Matt Forrest Esenwine, illustrated by Fred Koehler. Three kids shine a light on their imaginations without ever leaving their backyard. Accompanied by contrasting drawings and a rhythmic text.

**Flowers for Sarajevo** by John McCutcheon; illustrated by Kristy Caldwell. A bereaved young boy rediscovers strength and purpose through random acts of kindness in this honest look at war-torn Sarajevo.

**King of the Sky** by Nicola Davies; illustrated by Laura Carlin. Soft watercolors complement this warmhearted story of the friendship between a young immigrant boy and an elderly pigeon keeper.

**Little Fox in the Forest** by Stephanie Graegin. In this wordless and endearing picture book, two friends venture out into an enchanted forest to rescue a beloved stuffed animal.

**Little Wolf’s First Howling** by Laura McGee Kvasnosky; illustrated by Laura McGee Kvasnosky & Kate Harvey McGee. Little Wolf can’t help but follow the wild rhythm in his heart in this jazzy celebration of the creative spirit.

**My Beautiful Birds** by Suzanne Del Rizzo. Wild birds bring hope and promise to a young Syrian refugee. Polymer clay images add depth and texture to this heartrending tale.

**Niko Draws a Feeling** by Bob Raczka; illustrated by Simone Shin. No one but Niko understands his art, until a young girl recognizes the meaning of his abstract style.

**Pandora** by Victoria Turnbull. An injured bird chases away the clouds of loneliness for Pandora, a resourceful fox. Lush, scenic images echo Pandora’s changing emotions.

**Pizza! An Interactive Recipe Book** by Lotta Nieminen. Mix the dough, spread the sauce, and get ready to “eat” some great pizza in this hands-on recipe book for toddlers!

**The Queen of the Frogs** by Davide Cali; illustrated by Marco Somà. Elegantly illustrated in rich earth tones, this thought-provoking modern fable invites readers to question tyranny and envision a bright future for all.

**The Rooster Who Would Not Be Quiet!** by Carmen Agra Deedy; illustrated Eugene Yelchin. Discover this innovative fable about a rooster, who reminds a community of the importance of raising your voice for what you believe in, no matter the cost.

**Smoot: A Rebellious Shadow** by Michelle Cuevas; illustrated by Sydney Smith. Join a bored shadow on his first foray into freedom.

**Still a Family** by Brenda Reeves Sturgis; illustrated by Jo-Shin Lee. Being a family is more than just sharing the same space. Childlike drawings depict a family's experience of homelessness.

**Walk with Me** by Jairo Buitrago; illustrated by Rafael Yockteng. A girl conjures up an imaginary companion, a lion, who helps her with challenges in her daily life.

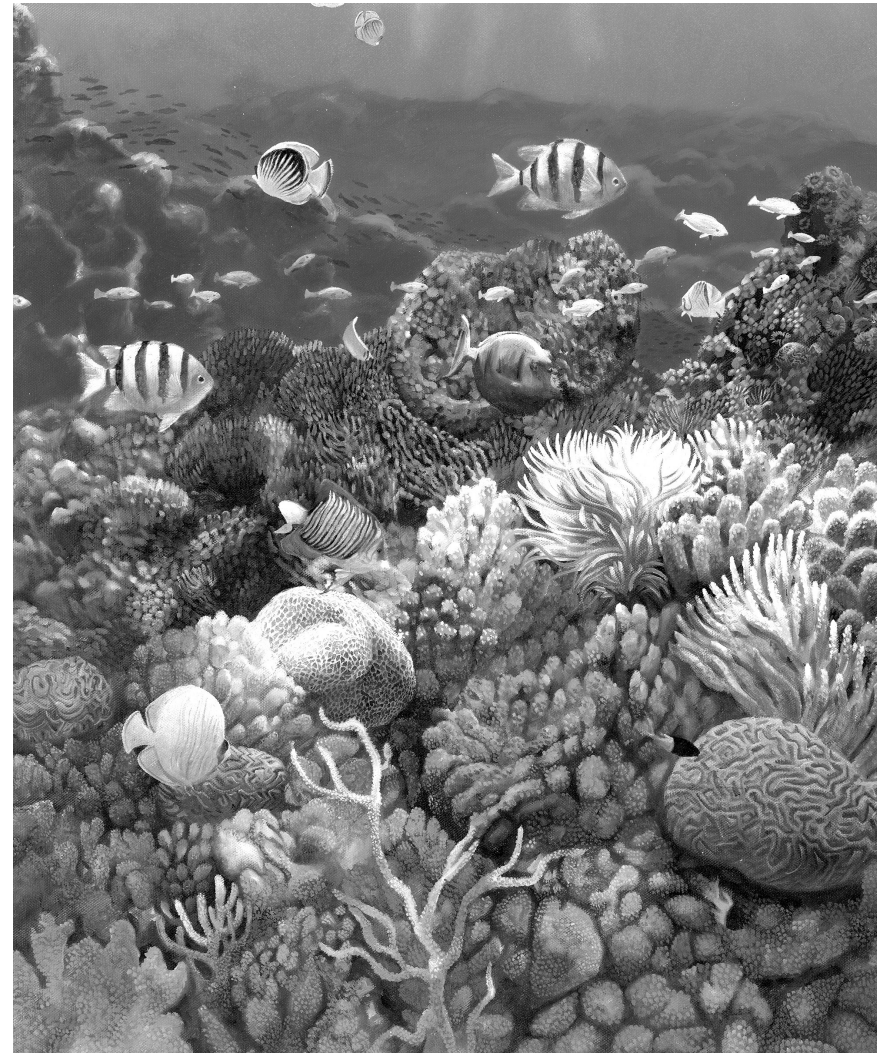
4 **Watersong** by Tim McCanna; illustrated by Richard Smythe. A fox seeks shelter from a storm in this lyrical, onomatopoeic romp—especially fun to read aloud.

**The Way Home in the Night** by Akiko Miyakoshi. Charcoal drawings evoke the sights, smells, and sounds of a neighborhood while a young bunny is carried safely home.

**The Wolf, the Duck, and the Mouse** by Mac Barnett; illustrated by Jon Klassen. Textured illustrations blend perfectly with this silly story of Duck and Mouse setting up house in Wolf's stomach.

## Stories for Younger Readers

**Ben's Revolution: Benjamin Russell and the Battle of Bunker Hill** by Nathaniel Philbrick; illustrated by Wendell Minor. Discover this beautifully illustrated, fictionalized account of a 12-year-old boy's Revolutionary War experience.



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“Study nature. Study science.”

— THE NEW OCEAN by BRYN BARNARD

**Bertolt** by Jacques Goldstyn; illustrated by Claudia Zoe Bedrick. Inviting and immersive colored pencil drawings bring to life a small child's love for an old oak tree.

**Captain Pug: The Dog Who Sailed the Seas** by Laura James; illustrated by Églantine Ceulemans. A silly, high-stakes adventure ensues when a water-fearing, jam-tart-loving pug follows his nose to the next picnic basket and gets separated from his girl.



**Charlie & Mouse** by Laurel Snyder; illustrated by Emily Hughes. Two brothers use their wits in their daily escapades. They gather friends for an impromptu party, discover the rewards of hard work, and more.

**Olga and the Smelly Thing from Nowhere** by Elise Gravel. What would you do if a strange, olive-eating, burping, farting creature appeared in your backyard? A self-assured young scientist systematically tries to figure out the mystery. Quirky graphics add to the fun.

**There's a Pest in the Garden!** by Jan Thomas. Duck and his friends defend their garden from a mysterious vegetable thief.

**Wolfie & Fly** by Cary Fagan; illustrated by Zoe Si. An aloof girl, who prefers facts over friends, reluctantly teams up with a persistent neighbor for a cardboard submarine adventure.

**Yours Sincerely, Giraffe** by Megumi Iwasa; illustrated by Jun Takabatake. Bored and lonely, Giraffe exchanges letters with Penguin, and a long-distance friendship is born. Hilarity ensues when Giraffe tries to imagine what Penguin looks like.

6 **Zoey and Sassafras: Dragons and Marshmallows** by Asia Citro; illustrated by Marion Lindsay. Fantasy and science combine when Zoey discovers her ability to nurse magical creatures back to health.



# Stories for Older Readers

**Armstrong & Charlie** by Steven B. Frank. Brought together by desegregation in the 1970s, two middle-schoolers unexpectedly form a friendship in this heartfelt and comical coming-of-age story.

**Beyond the Bright Sea** by Lauren Wolk. Curious and loving Crow is determined to discover the truth about her birth, but will her search lead the family and home she loves into danger? Higher-level readers will appreciate the engaging and atmospheric writing.

**The End of the Wild** by Nicole Helget. Will fracking destroy Fern's beloved forest, or will it bring industry back to a tired town? In clear, heartfelt prose, this story raises difficult questions and offers no easy answers.

**The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora** by Pablo Cartaya. A new crush, an ailing *abuela*, and a villainous real estate developer threaten Arturo's relaxing Miami summer.

**The First Rule of Punk** by Celia C. Pérez. Malú isn't the *señorita* Mom wants her to be. But a new school and new friends push the boundaries of her creativity and redefine her world.

**Forever, or a Long, Long Time** by Caela Carter. With the help of their adoptive mother, two siblings go on a quest to find their origins. In the process, they learn to trust in their forever home.

**The Goat** by Anne Fleming. When Kid sees a goat on her NYC rooftop, she embarks on a quest that involves her entire quirky community, leading them to face their fears and take a leap of faith.

**Hello, Universe** by Erin Entrada Kelly. A psychic, a bully, and a crush help a young Filipino boy find his inner *bayani* (hero).

**It All Comes Down to This** by Karen English. In the midst of racial tension in 1960s Los Angeles, Sophie—a 12-year-old African-American girl—grows closer to her college-bound sister as her family begins to fall apart.

**The Many Worlds of Albie Bright** by Christopher Edge. In a quest to find a dimension where his mother is still alive, can the Quantum Banana Theory help Albie travel to alternate realities?

**Me and Marvin Gardens** by Amy Sarig King. As developers encroach upon his family farm, a nature-loving boy discovers a creature whose very existence threatens the environment.

**Midnight Without a Moon** by Linda Williams Jackson. In this powerful story, resilient Rosa's struggle to escape her abusive family coincides with the fight for African-American civil rights in 1950s Mississippi.

**The Murderer's Ape** by Jakob Wegelius; translated by Peter Graves. Sally Jones—author, engineer, loyal friend, and gorilla—finds herself in the middle of a page-turning mystery of daring, wit, and intrigue.

**Posted** by John David Anderson. A sticky-note war at Branton Middle School leads students to confront the power of their words. Can Frost and his friends survive the war, or will it tear them apart?

8 **Refugee** by Alan Gratz. Alternating narratives chronicle the harrowing journeys of a Jewish boy in 1938, a Cuban girl in 1994, and a Syrian boy in 2015 as they all search for new homes.

**Scar Island** by Dan Gemeinhart. After a freak accident frees them from adult supervision, boys at a reformatory school fend for themselves in this action-packed adventure about power struggles and redemption.

**The Someday Birds** by Sally J. Pla. Four siblings and a mysterious stranger take a cross-country trip that redefines the meaning of family.

**Thornhill** by Pam Smy. This wrenching, chilling ghost story is told with two voices: one through diary entries, the other through black-and-white illustrations.

**Three Pennies** by Melanie Crowder. This magical, multivoiced novel of hope and renewal in San Francisco reveals that things are shifting—for an 11-year-old foster child about to be adopted, for a young owl who watches over the city, and for the tectonic plates deep underground.

*"Do you see—how with each mistake  
she is becoming?"*

— THE BOOK OF MISTAKES by Corinna Luyken





**Train I Ride** by Paul Mosier. Transient but meaningful relationships turn strangers into family aboard a cross-country train.

**Us, in Progress: Short Stories About Young Latinos** by Lulu Delacre. This hopeful, timely collection of vignettes depicts the lives and experiences of contemporary youth in the United States.

**A Whisper of Horses** by Zillah Bethell. In postapocalyptic London, Seren chases after remnants of the world before. A soulfully written book for older readers.

**York: The Shadow Cipher** by Laura Ruby. Three kids race against time to solve an 18th-century puzzle that will save their homes from destruction in this steampunk alternate history of New York City.

## Graphic Novels

**Bats: Learning to Fly** by Falynn Koch. Enjoy this fast-paced introduction to the world of bats—perfect for those who love science along with their laughs.

**The Big Bad Fox** by Benjamin Renner; translated by Joe Johnson. What's a fox to do when he can't catch a chicken for dinner? Hatch his own, of course! But this is a lot harder than he thought, especially when they think HE is Mom.

**Boat of Dreams** by Rogério Coelho. A man and a boy separated by time and distance are connected by a boat and their dreams. Affecting illustrations draw the reader into this epic journey of imagination.

**Bolivar** by Sean Rubin. In this ode to NYC, there really IS a dinosaur living next door to Sybil!

**Colette's Lost Pet** by Isabelle Arsenault. Nervous about making friends, Colette invents a lost pet whose description gradually grows to be as fanciful as the brightly colored accents in these otherwise sepia-toned illustrations.

**Fish Girl** by David Wiesner & Donna Jo Napoli. A budding friendship helps a young mermaid test the boundaries of her man-made prison.

**5 Worlds: The Sand Warrior** by Mark Siegel & Alexis Siegel; illustrated by Xanthe Bouma, Matt Rockefeller & Boya Sun. Join Oona Lee and her ragtag crew as they embark on a mission to save 5 Worlds in this thoughtfully designed space opera.

**Nightlights** by Lorena Alvarez. Lush, bold illustrations enhance a supernatural, dreamlike tale about a young artist overcoming her self-doubt and inner criticism.

**One Trick Pony** by Nathan Hale. In a future where all technology is under attack, a robot pony may be the key to saving humanity.



*“Bronzeville lady / Way past cool / Voice like butter / Melting blues”*

— “HUE AND CRY” by Kwame Alexander, from *OUT OF WONDER*

# Folktales and Fairy Tales

**The Crane Girl** by Curtis Manley; illustrated by Lin Wang. In this poignant retelling with atmospheric illustrations and interspersed haiku, an injured crane changes the life of her rescuer.

**The Golem of Prague** by Irène Cohen-Janca; illustrated by Maurizio A.C. Quarello. Foreboding watercolors evoke a somber ambiance in this haunting tale, derived from Jewish folklore, of a young boy who becomes a guardian.

**Snow & Rose** by Emily Winfield Martin. Two sisters, a large bear, a pair of scissors, and a whole lot of courage save an enchanted forest in this retelling of a little-known fairy tale.

## Poetry

**The Alphabet Thief** by Bill Richardson; illustrated by Roxanna Bikadoroff. Clever wordplay, madcap illustrations, and a driving rhythm make this jaunty rhyming book.

**Bravo! Poems About Amazing Hispanics** by Margarita Engle; illustrated by Rafael López. Striking portraits accompany biographical poems that showcase compelling figures from diverse backgrounds.

**Gone Camping: A Novel in Verse** by Tamera Will Wissinger; illustrated by Matthew Cordell. Different forms of poetry highlight the ups and downs of camping with Grandpa.

**Let's Clap, Jump, Sing & Shout; Dance, Spin & Turn It Out! Games, Songs & Stories from an African American Childhood** collected by Patricia C. McKissack; illustrated by Brian Pinkney. Discover this comprehensive collection to be shared and treasured.

**Martí's Song for Freedom/Martí y sus versos por la libertad** by Emma Otheguy; illustrated by Beatriz Vidal. The famed Cuban poet's devotion to justice and admiration for nature are chronicled in verse.

**One Last Word: Wisdom from the Harlem Renaissance** by Nikki Grimes. This lyrical tribute honors the spirit of the Harlem Renaissance by transforming well-known verse into original poetry that reflects the modern African-American experience.

**Out of Wonder: Poems Celebrating Poets** by Kwame Alexander with Chris Colderley and Marjory Wentworth; illustrated by Ekua Holmes. Three contemporary writers pay tribute to some of the world's most renowned poets by creating works based on their styles, themes, and lives in this boldly illustrated collection.

**That Is My Dream! A Picture Book of Langston Hughes's "Dream Variation"** by Langston Hughes; illustrated by Daniel Miyares. Vibrant illustrations reinvigorate this modern classic about an African-American boy's daily struggle with racial tension and his dreams of freedom.

**Things to Do** by Elaine Magliaro; illustrated by Catia Chien. A young child sets off to explore her world in this collection of lyrical odes.

**Thunder Underground** by Jane Yolen; illustrated by Josée Masse. Imagine what happens in the earth beneath our feet!

**Tony** by Ed Galing; illustrated by Erin E. Stead. Pencil drawings softly evoke a bygone era and a childhood friendship with the milkman's horse.

**When My Sister Started Kissing** by Helen Frost. Claire must deal with a summer of changes in this sweet and appealing coming-of-age novel told in verse from three distinct perspectives.





# Nonfiction

**American Pharoah: Triple Crown Champion** by Shelley Fraser Mickle. Racehorse history is made in this winning book that gives an insider's view of a whole team that raised a champion.

**Creekfinding: A True Story** by Jacqueline Briggs Martin; illustrated by Claudia McGehee. An inviting tale of a long-lost stream and one farmer's work to revitalize an ecosystem is depicted with dramatic woodcut illustrations.

**Danza! Amalia Hernández and El Ballet Folklórico de México** by Duncan Tonatiuh. Mixtec-inspired art and engaging text work hand in hand in this homage to the iconic dancer and choreographer whose work celebrates Mexico's rich heritage.

**Dazzle Ships: World War I and the Art of Confusion** by Chris Barton; illustrated by Victo Ngai. How do you win a war when your ships keep getting sunk? Paint them dazzling colors and zany patterns. Readers will be stunned by these art-deco-inspired illustrations.

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*"To tell you the truth, I have a feeling I'm not like other people."*

— BERTOLT by Jacques Goldstyn

**Feathers and Hair: What Animals Wear** by Jennifer Ward; illustrated by Jing Jing Tsong. Featuring a variety of animals, this book's simple rhymes and captivating colors are perfect for young readers.

**42 Is Not Just a Number: The Odyssey of Jackie Robinson, American Hero** by Doreen Rappaport. This fun, fast read gives deeper insight into the background of the groundbreaking baseball icon.

**Grace Hopper: Queen of Computer Code** by Laurie Wallmark; illustrated by Katy Wu. Ever wonder why computer glitches are called "bugs?" Look no further than Grace Hopper—inventor, mathematician, and dedicated problem-solver.

**Grand Canyon** by Jason Chin. A father and daughter's hike through the Grand Canyon unveils its ecological wonders, showcased in richly layered watercolor images and clever time-travel cutouts.

**If You Were the Moon** by Laura Purdie Salas; illustrated by Jaime Kim. Enchanting art portrays the phases of the moon and its playful dance with Earth.

**Locked Up for Freedom: Civil Rights Protesters at the Leesburg Stockade** by Heather E. Schwartz. Personal narratives and jarring photographs explore the shocking treatment of child activists during the Civil Rights Movement.

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**Maya Lin: Thinking with Her Hands** by Susan Goldman Rubin. Lin is best known as the young student with a bold vision for the Vietnam War Memorial. This artful biography explores the various elements that inspire her work.

**Muddy: The Story of Blues Legend Muddy Waters** by Michael Mahin; illustrated by Evan Turk. Kinetic artwork evokes the musical vibe of Muddy Waters and his experience during the Great Migration.

**The Music of Life: Bartolomeo Cristofori & the Invention of the Piano** by Elizabeth Rusch; illustrated by Marjorie Priceman. With luminous prose and snippets of primary source material, this lively biography details the work of Cristofori and the possibilities he created for generations of musicians to come.

**The New Ocean: The Fate of Life in a Changing Sea** by Bryn Barnard. Take an evocative look through text and art at what could happen to our oceans if we stay on our current course.

**Noah Webster's Fighting Words** by Tracy Nelson Maurer; illustrated by Mircea Catusanu. Learn about a true revolutionary whose work created a uniquely American lexicon.

**The Quilts of Gee's Bend** by Susan Goldman Rubin. African-American history is artfully pieced together in this look at the isolated community of Gee's Bend, Alabama, and the quilters who put it on the map.

**Schomburg: The Man Who Built a Library** by Carole Boston Weatherford; illustrated by Eric Velasquez. His lifelong passion for collecting books, letters, music, and art from Africa and the African diaspora resulted in a lasting legacy now preserved in the heart of Harlem.



*“poetry is not just words on a page...it is...a snowflake on your tongue...”*

— “SNAPSHOTS” by Chris Colderly, from OUT OF WONDER

**Seven Wonders of the Solar System** by David A. Aguilar. Get an in-depth look into our solar system, with a focus on the intricate circumstances that could lead to life evolving elsewhere in the universe.

**Shell, Beak, Tusk: Shared Traits and the Wonders of Adaptation** by Bridget Heos. Why do both parrots and octopuses have beaks? This fun, informational text captures the similarities and differences in animal characteristics that have evolved over time.

**The Whydah: A Pirate Ship Feared, Wrecked, and Found** by Martin W. Sandler. Discover the wild tale of a 19th-century slave ship, its second life commandeered by pirates, and the quest to find its sunken remains and legendary bounty.

**The World Is Not a Rectangle: A Portrait of Architect Zaha Hadid** by Jeanette Winter. Organic shapes and symbols from her native Iraq inspired Hadid's work as a world-renowned architect who fearlessly pushed the boundaries of what buildings could be.

## Acknowledgments

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