**Ackerman, Karen. *Song and Dance Man*. New York: Knopf, 1988.**

Grandpa used to be a song and dance man. He once performed on stage in front of big audiences at old-time vaudeville theaters. Now, he performs in the dusty attic for his grandkids, but you know, they might just be the best audience yet.

**Amato, Mary. *The Chicken of the Family*. New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 2008.**

Henrietta doesn’t take her older sisters seriously when they tell her she’s really a chicken – until she wakes up to find an egg in her bed and feathers on her floor. She decides to find her real family on Barney’s farm. Henrietta is having a great time being a chicken, but Kim and Clare will be in BIG trouble if they can’t get her to come home.

**Bunting, Eve. *Smoky Night*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1994.**

Mama doesn’t shop at the store across the street because Mrs. Kim is different. Even their family cats don’t get along. From the window, the little boy can see the rioters breaking window and raiding stores, stealing cereal and rice from Mrs. Kim. When the apartment building catches fire, it is time to head for shelter. Every one is safe, except the little boy can’t find his yellow cat anywhere, and Mrs. Kim can’t find hers either.

**Burton, Virginia Lee. *The Little House*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1942.**

Long ago, a Little House was lovingly built in the country. Many seasons pass, year after year, and the Little House sees many changes. First come cars and paved roads, then tall buildings, then trains and subways. The Little House is no longer in the country at all but is right in the middle of a big city. Will the Little House ever get to hear the birds sing or gaze at the stars again?

**Gerstein, Mordicai. *The Man Who Walked Between the Towers*. Brookfield, CT: Roaring Brook, 2003.**

From the moment work began on the Twin Towers in New York City, Philippe dreamed of one day walking the tightrope between them. He knew he would never get permission from the building owners for something so dangerous, so he had to be sneaky. Disguised as construction workers, Philippe and his friends set up for his big moment.

**Henkes, Kevin. *Kitten’s First Full Moon*. New York: Greenwillow, 2004.**

Looking at the night sky, Kitten sees a giant bowl of milk, just waiting for her to drink it. She chases after the milk but soon becomes frustrated. No matter how hard she tries she just can’t seem to reach it.

**Holt, Kimberly Willis. *Skinny Brown Dog*. New York: Holt, 2007.**

When a skinny brown dog shows up at Benny’s Bakery, Benny makes it clear that he doesn’t want a dog. Day after day the skinny brown dog sits outside the bakery. Customers name him Brownie and tell Benny what a nice dog he has. Benny starts to think that he might want a dog after all and soon finds out that he *needs* Brownie.

**Holt, Kimberly Willis. *Waiting for Gregory*. New York: Holt, 2006.**

A little girl can’t wait for her cousin Gregory to be born, but it seems that waiting is exactly what she has to do. It is taking a long time, so she asks the adults in her family when Gregory will *finally* get here. Each one gives her a different answer: when storks fly, when cabbages grow, when ladders to heaven are built. What does it all mean, and when will Gregory get here?

**Juster, Norton. *The Hello, Goodbye Window*. New York: Michael Di Capua/Hyperion, 2005.**

The Hello, Goodbye Window at Nanna and Poppy’s house is not just any window. It is a window in just the right place for surprises, making faces, greeting the morning, and blowing kisses when their granddaughter comes to stay.

**Kerby, Mona. *Owney the Mail-Pouch Pooch*. New York: Frances Foster, 2008.**

Owney was a stray dog looking for a home. But although mailmen tried taking him home, Owney preferred the Albany Post Office. He loved the smell of the mailmen’s blue wool uniforms and became very attached to the mail – so attached that he even started hopping trains to make sure each letter got to its destination.

**Martin, Jacqueline Briggs. *Snowflake Bentley*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998.**

Children love snow. For Wilson Bentley that love became a scientific fascination. When he was a teenager, he examined snowflakes under his microscope. He wanted to know everything about them. When he discovered that each snowflake was unique, he knew he needed to find a way to share their beauty with the world.

**McCloskey, Robert. *Make Way for Ducklings*. New York: Viking, 1969.**

Mr. and Mrs. Mallard search for a place to raise their family. They love eating the peanuts people throw at the Boston Public Garden pond, but they need a safer spot for their babies to be born. When their eight new ducklings have mastered walking in a line, swimming, and diving they are ready for the big move. Mr. Mallard has already left. Now Mrs. Mallard just needs to get the ducklings safely to the Public Garden.

**McCully, Emily Arnold. *Mirette on the High Wire*. New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1992.**

Mirette is entranced when she sees a guest at her mother’s boardinghouse walk across the clothesline. She wants to learn the magic of walking the tightrope, but Bellini doesn’t want to teach Mirette at first. It turns out that Bellini has just as much to learn from Mirette as she has to learn from him.

**Milhous, Katherine. *The Egg Tree*. New York: Atheneum, 1950.**

When Katy and Carl participate in their first egg hunt, Carl does well, but poor Katy can’t find any eggs. Her efforts are rewarded when she finds the most beautiful eggs of all in a hatbox in the attic. The eggs, carefully hollowed out and painted by Grandmom, are so beautiful the family displays them on a little tree. Grandmom promises to show Katy, Carl, and their cousins how to make the eggs, and Carl has big plans for them.

**Rathmann, Peggy. *Officer Buckle and Gloria*. New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1995.**

Officer Buckle’s safety lectures at schools are important but boring, until he starts bringing Gloria the police dog along. What Officer Buckle doesn’t realize is that he isn’t the star of the show.

**Rohmann, Eric. *My Friend Rabbit*. Brookfield, CT: Roaring Brook, 2002.**

As Mouse says, where rabbit goes “trouble follows.” When Rabbit get Mouse’s toy airplane stuck in a tree, he needs a little help reaching it. But piling up an elephant, a rhinoceros, a deer, a bear, a hippo, and an alligator to reach the plane might not be the best solution.

**Say, Allen. *Grandfather’s Journey*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1993.**

Allen’s grandfather loved his homeland of Japan, but he fell in love with his new home in America, too. He was amazed by the varied landscape: the mountains, the farm fields, the tall buildings. Though Allen’s grandfather eventually returned to mountains and rivers of his childhood, he spoke fondly of California that Allen needed to see it for himself.

**Selznick, Brian. *The Invention of Hugo Cabret: A Novel in Words and Pictures*. New York: Scholastic, 2007.**

Hugo’s father was a clock maker, and Hugo keeps the station clocks running when his timekeeper uncle disappears. Alone, Hugo must steal to eat and also to find parts for the automaton – the mechanical man his father died repairing. Hugo is determined to restore the automaton, but his work is interrupted when he is caught stealing a mechanical mouse.

**Sendak, Maurice. *Where the Wild Things Are*. New York: HarperCollins, 1963.**

After an evening of mischief-making in his wolf costume, Max is sent to bed without supper. But that is okay because Max discovers that a forest is growing right in his room, and there’s a whole ocean, too. So he sails to the island where the Wild Things are, a place where he can be as wild as he likes.

**St. George, Judith. *So You Want to Be President*. New York: Philomel, 2000.**

If you dream of becoming President of the United States, it might help your campaign if your parents gave you a presidential name like George, John, Andrew, or James. You might have an advantage if you have a former president in your family. And if you want to be a great president, try not to be too good-looking. The best presidents never are.

**Swanson, Susan Marie. *The House in the Night*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2008.**

A young child connects sources of “light” in his/her life. These include the key to the house and the storybook pictures that allow imagination to take flight. The child’s place in the world is clear. No matter from what direction these “lights” are viewed, finding connections is a comforting step in getting ready for bed.

T**aback, Simms. *Joseph Had a Little Overcoat*. New York: Viking, 1999.**

Joseph has a favorite little overcoat. It is old and ratty at the bottom, so he makes it into a short jacket. When the sleeves of the jacket get worn out, Joseph makes it a vest. Pretty soon, the vest becomes a scarf. The overcoat keeps getting smaller and smaller and smaller. What will Joseph do when he has nothing left?

**Van Allsburg, Chris. *Jumanji*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981.**

A board game seems like a good, clean way to spend your time while your parents are out, but Jumanji isn’t just a board game. The directions on the board are very real. Peter and Judy find themselves with a ferocious lion on their piano and monkeys in their kitchen. And the worst part is they have to finish playing the game.

**Van Allsburg, Chris. *The Polar Express*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985.**

A young boy lies in bed on Christmas Eve thinking. His friend told him that there isn’t a Santa Claus, but he still believes. Hearing noises, he looks out the window to find a train in his front yard. He joins other pajama-clad children heading to the North Pole on the Polar Express. When Santa selects the young boy to receive the first gift of Christmas, the boy knows he must ask for something that will prove Santa really does exist.

**Willems, Mo. *Are You Ready to Play Outside?*. New York: Hyperion, 2008.**

Gerald and Piggie are all set to play outside. Piggie is particularly excited – until he feels a raindrop. The next thing they know, it is pouring, and Gerald has one unhappy pig on his hands. But two little worms sure seem to be having fun, which makes Gerald wonder: can he and Piggie have fun in the rain, too?

**Willems, Mo. *There is a Bird on Your Head*. New York: Hyperion, 2007.**

Gerald has a problem. There is a bird on his head. And just when he thinks he’s gotten rid of the bird, it comes back – with another bird. When they start building a nest, it seems that Gerald’s head may become a full house if Piggie can’t help his friend.

**Wiesner, David. *Tuesday*. New York: Clarion, 1991.**

Tuesdays are just boring weekdays. Nothing special happens on a plain old Tuesday evening, right? That’s what an unsuspecting turtle thought until he was nearly run over by a swarm of frogs on flying lily pads.

**Wiesner, David. *Flotsam*. New York: Clarion, 2006.**

A young boy goes to the beach armed with tools to help him explore: a magnifying glass, a microscope, and a pair of binoculars. He begins by investigating small crabs, but after being wiped out by a big wave, the boy finds an underwater camera in the sand. His biggest beach discovery comes about when he decides to develop the roll of film inside.

**Wiesner, David. *The Three Pigs*. New York: Clarion, 2001.**

No matter the version, the main story of “The Three Little Pigs” is always the same. The pigs build their houses, and only the house that is made of bricks survives the wolf’s huffing and puffing. But what if one pig was huffed and puffed right out of the story and he got his brothers to step outside, too? These three pigs are breaking all the storybook rules.

**Yolen, Jane. *Owl Moon*. New York: Philomel, 1987.**

It is a winter night, well past bedtime. A little girl in a pink parka is finally old enough to go owling with her father. Her older brothers have all been with Pa before. The little girl knows to be quiet and brave. She also knows they might not see anything, but she hopes to share a special moment with her Pa and a Great Horned Owl.

**Yourinks, Arthur. *Hey, Al*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1986.**

Al the janitor lives in a tiny apartment with his dog Eddie. Eddie isn’t satisfied with their life. When a mysterious giant bird invites Al to be his guest in a place with no worries, Eddie packs their bags. But Al and Eddie soon realize paradise isn’t quite what they thought it would be.

**Curtis, Christopher Paul. *Bud, Not Buddy*. New York: Delacorte, 1999.**

Bud’s mother left him with an identity: he is Bud – NOT Buddy. But she only left him with only a few clues about the identity of his father. A handful of flyers and some unusual rocks point to the jazz musician Herman E. Calloway. When his foster placement doesn’t work out, Bud sets out to find Herman and a place to call home.

**DiCamillo, Kate. *The Tale of Despereaux*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick, 2003.**

Despereaux is born a disappointment – an itty-bitty mouse with very large ears, the only one of his litter to survive. Despereaux doesn’t even act like a mouse; he would rather read books than nibble their pages, and he is hopelessly in love with a human princess – a princess he is determined to save.

**Gaimon, Neil. *The Graveyard Book*. New York: HarperCollins, 2008.**

Bod’s name, Nobody Owens, isn’t typical, and neither is his adoptive family. As a baby, Bod escaped the tragic fate of his birth family. Bod wandered to a safe place where he has been given protection and care, a place he has come to call home – the graveyard. Bod is being raised by ghosts.

**Hesse, Karen. *Out of the Dust*. New York: Scholastic, 1997.**

Dust, whipped up from the overworked Oklahoma farmland, covers everything; it seeps into the house despite Ma’s careful cleaning. Daddy is tied to his land and determined to grow wheat, but it’s been three years since there was enough rain. Still the Kelbys try to remain positive until a terrible accident robs them of their hope.

**Holt, Kimberly Willis. *Dancing in the Cadillac Light*. New York: Holt, 2001.**

Jaynell isn’t old enough to drive, but sitting behind the wheel of a car calms her. When Grandpap moves in with Jaynell’s family, Jaynell’s father asks her to keep an eye on him. Grandpap’s memory may be starting to slip, but when he impulsively buys a 1962 Cadillac and invites a poor family to move into his empty home, Jaynell is the only one who knows he’s not crazy.

**Holt, Kimberly Willis. *Keeper of the Night*. New York: Holt, 2003.**

When Isabel’s mother kills herself, every member of their family is haunted by her memory. Isabel doesn’t smile anymore. Tata sleeps in the spot on the floor where his wife’s body was found. Olivia wets the bed. And Frank uses knives to carve into his walls – and himself.

**Holt, Kimberly Willis. *My Louisiana Sky*. New York: Holt, 1998.**

There is no doubt that Tiger Ann is well loved, but it isn’t always easy having two parents who with mental limitations. Thankfully, Tiger’s grandmother has everything under control. But when Granny is suddenly no longer able to guide the family, Tiger is faced with big decisions and big responsibilities.

**Holt, Kimberly Willis. *Part of Me: Stories of a Louisiana Family*. New York: Holt, 2006.**

Trace four generations of a Louisiana family through books. Rose meets her husband through her first job as a bookmobile driver. Her son Merle Henry is a young animal-trapper with a soft spot for *Old Yeller*. Until the girls at school start spreading rumors, his daughter Annabeth loves discussing books with her new older friend. And Annabeth’s son Kyle hates reading, but discovers the joy of *Harry Potter* through his summer job at the library.

**Holt, Kimberly Willis. *Piper Reed:* *The Great Gypsy*. New York: Holt, 2008.**

Piper’s Dad is away serving on the U.S.S. Pride, and the ladies of the Reed household are doing their best to keep busy while he’s gone. Mom is a substitute art teacher at Piper and Sam’s school. Twelve-year-old Tori is interested in boys. Sam is occupied with her goldfish, Peaches. And Piper is busy planning a pet show she intends to win. But how can she impress her father, when Piper hasn’t managed to teach Bruna a single trick?

**Holt, Kimberly Willis. *Piper Reed: Navy Brat*. New York: Holt, 2007.**

Piper Reed is the middle daughter of in a navy family, and they are moving again – to Pensacola, FL or “Pepsi-Cola,” if you ask Piper’s little sister Sam. Piper is sad to leave behind her tree house, her Gypsy Club, and a room of her own. She feels better when she learns two things: (1) Her family is getting a dog and (2) the Blue Angels are based in Florida.

**Holt, Kimberly Willis. *When Zachary Beaver Came to Town*. New York: Holt, 1999.**

This summer is not typical. Toby Wilson’s mother has left to become the next Tammy Wynette, and his best friend’s brother is serving in Vietnam. To top it all off, a trailer arrives in small-town Antler, TX claiming to contain the fattest boy in the world. Zachary Beaver is fat and not very friendly, but the boys are determined to figure him out. Toby may not know it yet, but helping Zachary find fulfillment is just what Toby needs to find himself.

**Kadohata, Cynthia. *Kira-kira*. New York: Atheneum, 2004.**

Katie Takeshima’s sister Lynn taught her to say her first word – *kira-kira*, or “glittering” in Japanese. Lynn also taught Katie to appreciate the water and the night sky, which are *kira-kira*. Life is already hard for the Takeshima’s as they try to make ends meet on poor wages from the poultry industry. Life gets a lot tougher when Lynn becomes seriously ill.

**Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. *Shiloh*. New York: Atheneum, 1991.**

While roaming the hills near his West Virginia home, eleven-year-old Marty realizes that he is being followed, by a timid beagle. Marty becomes quickly attached, naming the dog Shiloh. But Shiloh is Judd Travers’s new hunting dog, and Marty must return him, even though the dog’s behavior suggests that he is mistreated by Judd. Marty doesn’t just want a dog anymore; he wants Shiloh, and he’ll do anything to keep him safe.

**Park, Linda Sue. *A Single Shard*. New York: Clarion, 2001.**

Tree-ear never gets tired of watching the village potters make beautiful green pottery. When he damages one of Min’s pieces, Tree-ear gets his chance to apprentice with the renowned potter as repayment. But if all Min lets Tree-ear do is chop firewood and haul clay, how can he ever realize his dream of becoming a potter himself?

**Paterson, Katherine. *Jacob Have I Loved*. New York: HarperCollins, 1980.**

Ever since their birth, Louise’s sister Caroline has commanded all the attention. Caroline is the frail, feminine twin with golden hair and the voice of an angel while Louise is the strong, dark twin, drawn to the life of a waterman. Louise has learned to accept her lesser status in her family, but when Caroline wins over her closest friends, Louise reaches her breaking point.

**Patron, Susan. *The Higher Power of Lucky*. New York: Richard Jackson/Atheneum, 2006.**

Lucky knows what twelve-step program members when they talk about hitting rock bottom. Her mother is dead, and she doesn’t know her father. Lucky’s guardian, Brigitte, was married to Lucky’s father *before* her mom, and with no true family ties between them, Brigitte could return to France any day. What Lucky needs is to find her higher power like the twelve-step members, and she needs to find it fast.

**Peck, Richard. *A Year Down Yonder*. New York: Dial, 2000.**

Mary Alice isn’t pleased about being sent to live in Hickville with her grandmother, but life with Grandma Dowdel proves to be more interesting than Mary Alice thought. After all, not every grandmother outsmarts school bullies and plots revenge against Halloween pranksters. Not every grandmother spends her nights trapping foxes animals and stealing pie ingredients from her neighbors’ yards either.

**Pennypacker, Sara. *Clementine*. New York: Hyperion, 2006.**

**Pennypacker, Sara. *Clementine*. Recorded Books. CD. 2007.**

Clementine is a handful. She calls her brother “broccoli” and “spinach” to make up for having a fruit name like Clementine and finds the perfect names for kittens on bathroom labels. Clementine does pay attention in school, just never to the right things. Still, it must to be said, that Clementine is very helpful, whether she is battling pigeon poop with her father or helping her friend Margaret solve a “hairy” dilemma.

**Rylant, Cynthia. *Missing May*. New York: Richard Jackson/Orchard, 1992.**

When May, the woman who has been Summer’s mother, passes away it is difficult for Summer to take in, but not as difficult as it is for May’s husband, Ob. He fixates on simple memories with May like when she would help him rub on his Ben-Gay. Ob needs to believe that May is still present, that he can communicate with her, in order to keep himself going. Summer just wishes that she was enough to make getting up in the morning worth the effort for Ob.

**Spinelli, Jerry. *Maniac Magee*. New York: Little, Brown, and Co., 1990.**

Maniac Magee was not born in a dump with a sofa spring for a heart as the legend goes. But Jeffrey Magee is amazing athlete, lightning fast, and extremely good at untying complicated knots. He is also the kind of boy who helps with the dishes without being asked. Perhaps what is most remarkable about Maniac Magee is that he is as comfortable on the East side of town as he is on the West.

**Bateman, Teresa. *Fiona’s Luck*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge, 2007.**

**Bateman, Teresa. *Fiona’s Luck*. Recorded Books. CD. 2007.**

There used to be plenty of luck in Ireland, but when the leprechauns decide the big people are attracting more than their fair share, they hide all the luck in Ireland away for themselves. The cows stop giving milk, the chickens stop laying eggs, and the potatoes rot in the ground. Luckily, Fiona has a plan to trick the king of the leprechauns and restore luck to her people.

**Clements, Andrew. *No Talking*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2007.**

Teachers are always telling kids to stop talking. Talking can very disruptive. But who knew being quiet can cause a disruption, too? The Laketon Elementary School teachers are shocked when their chattiest students, the fifth graders, stop talking for two whole days. What starts off as a heated competition, boys against girls, becomes a learning experience for the whole school – kids, teachers, and even the principal.

**Keller, Laurie. *Do Unto Otters: A Book About Manners*. New York: Holt, 2007.**

Mr. Rabbit is worried about getting along with his hew neighbors, the otters. A wise owl shares the saying “Do unto otters as you would have otters do unto you” with Mr. Rabbit, which gets Mr. Rabbit thinking, “How would I like the otters to treat me?”

**Stevens, Janet and Susan Stevens Crummel. *The Great Fuzz Frenzy*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2005.**

When a playful dog named Violet drops her tennis ball down a hole, the prairie dogs who live there don’t know what to think. They may not know what the tennis ball is, but they sure do know how to use its fuzz to make a fashion statement. What will happen when there isn’t enough fuzz to go around and one prairie dog gets greedy?

**Watt, Mélanie. *Scaredy Squirrel*. Toronto: Kids Can, 2006.**

Scaredy Squirrel is perfectly happy following the same old routine every day in his nut tree. He does not want to venture into the unknown where there are many things that Scaredy Squirrel is afraid of, such as tarantulas, poison ivy, and germs. But one day when things do not go as planned, he learns things he never knew about the world and himself.

**Climo, Shirley. *The Irish Cinderlad*. New York: HarperCollins, 1996.**

The shoe is on the other foot in this Cinderella story. That’s right – Cinderella is a boy! Everyone cheers when Becan, the Cinderlad, saves Princess Finola from being eaten by a dragon, but he doesn’t stick around long when he spots his stepsisters in the crowd. Princess Finola must track him down using the giant boot he left behind.

**Fleischman, Paul. *Glass Slipper, Gold Sandal: A Worldwide Cinderella.* New York: Holt, 2007.**

Suppose you could have not only a fairy godmother but also magical cows, crocodiles, and roosters and a Godfather Snake. Piecing together fairytale segments from Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas, this Cinderella story features the usual evil stepmother and stepsisters, plus a few fantastic extras.

**McDermott, Gerald. *Arrow to the Sun: A Pueblo Indian Tale*. New York: Viking, 1974.**

Not knowing your dad is hard enough without having other kids pick on you. That is why the Pueblo Boy is determined to find his fatherThe Arrow Maker launches the Boy in the right direction – toward the sun. Once there, the Boy must pass four tests to prove that he is the child of Lord of the Sun.

**Mora, Pat. *Doña Flor: A Tall Tale About a Giant Woman With a Great Big Heart*. New York: Knopf, 2005.**

Doña Flor had a mother whose singing voice caused corn plants to grow as tall as trees. When her mother sang to Doña Flor, the baby grew to be larger-than-life. Doña Flor is a great friend to have around: she can carry children to school so they won’t be late, and her tortillas are both delicious and useful as rafts. When the townspeople become terrified at the roar of a mountain lion, Doña Flor makes it her mission to find and quiet the wild cat.

**Wisniewski, David. *Golem*. New York: Clarion, 1996.**

According to tradition, in a time when the Jewish people need protection, a truly faithful, religious man can form their defender from clay. This giant clay warrior is called a golem. The Jews in 1589’s Prague have never needed protection more, but what will the consequences of molding the golem be?

**Young, Ed. *Lon Po Po: A Red-Riding Hood Story from China*. New York: Philomel, 1989.**

Three little sisters are left home alone when their mother goes to visit their grandmother, Po Po, for her birthday. Imagine their surprise when their Po Po shows up at their door with a deep voice, bushy tails, and claws.

**Zelinsky, Paul O. *Rapunzel*. New York: Dutton, 1997.**

When a man is caught stealing from the garden of a sorceress, he must bargain to save his pregnant wife; the sorceress will trade him her rapunzel for his – his baby girl. When Rapunzel grows the sorceress keeps her in a tower that can only be reached by climbing up the girl’s flowing hair. But Rapunzel’s tightening waistband reveals that she has had another visitor besides the sorceress – a husband she married in secret.

**Bishop, Nic. *Spiders*. New York: Scholastic Nonfiction, 2007.**

How would you like to meet a spider as large as a big picture book? That’s the size of Goliath birdeater tarantula photographed for *Spiders*. No matter their size, spiders are natural hunters. Some use webs and some, like the fishing spider don’t, but all spiders eat by sucking out the liquid insides of their prey.

**Dowson, Nick. *Tracks of a Panda*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick, 2007.**

Though pandas eventually grow to be quite large, they are born as tiny, bald pink cubs, small enough to fit in a mother panda’s paw. A baby panda feeds on his mother’s milk, but a grown panda needs large quantities of bamboo to serve. Pandas also need their space. A mother panda will travel for miles if necessary to find food away from humans and other pandas.

**George, Jean Craighead. *The Wolves Are Back*. New York: Dutton, 2008.**

A long time ago, it was decided that only gentle animals should live in the United States national parks. All the wolves were shot, but no one realized that without them, there would be too many deer and elk. No one realized that with too many grass-eating animals, the ecosystem would become unbalanced. When they finally saw how much wolves are needed, ten were brought to the United States from Canada. The wolves are back.

**Gibbons, Gail. *Elephants of Africa*. New York: Holiday House, 2008.**

Female elephants live together in herds. They are an extended family with everyone helping to care for and protect the herd’s calves. The matriarch or head female elephant leads her herd in the search for food and water. Sometimes she may need to use her tusks to dig into the earth for underground sources of water. An elephant’s trunk is perfectly adapted to gently pluck plants for eating as well as to drink, shower, and snorkel.

**Hilliard, Richard. *Ham the Astrochimp*. Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills, 2007.**

During the early 1960s, very little was known about space travel, including whether or not it was safe for humans. The Russians had sent a dog into space, and in 1961, it was America’s turn. Ham, a chimpanzee, was sent into space in the Mercury rocket. Chimpanzees are the closest animal relatives to humans. Because they are very smart and can be trained, NASA engineers were hoping to use Ham find out whether humans would be able to function and perform tasks in space.

**Jenkins, Steve and Robin Page. *Sisters and Brothers: Sibling Relationships in the Animal World*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2008.**

Relationships between brothers and sisters can be different depending on the type of animal. Similar to humans, elephants are normally born one at a time, but they will get to know their older sisters who help look after them. Some animals like cichlids and myrnas will care for children of other animals, just like human adoption. Unlike humans, black widow spiderlings are born hundreds at a time and those who are first to be born eat the others.

**Nivola, Claire A. *Planting the Trees of Kenya*. New York: Frances Foster, 2008.**

Wangari Maathai grew up in a green Kenya, but when she returned from college in the United States, she found that nearly all of the trees had been cut down. There were no roots to hold the soil in place when it rained. Wangari organized a group of women to help her plant new trees. The women were proud. They could plant trees even if they couldn’t read. Over 30 million trees have been planted in Kenya since Wangari started her movement.

**Sayre, April Pulley. *Vulture View*. New York: Holt, 2007.**

Vultures can see many things from on high when they are flying. But what they are looking for is something tasty to eat – tasty to a vulture that is. You might be surprised by what a vulture calls dinner. You might even think it’s gross.

**Winter, Jeanette. *Wangari’s Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, 2008.**

Wangari Maathai grows up in Kenya surrounded by trees, able to gather firewood in nearby forests. Wangari goes to college in the United States, but returns home shocked to see almost no trees and women walking miles to find firewood. Wangari starts her movement by planting nine seedling trees in her own backyard. Soon Wangari forms a group of women to help her plant trees. No one believes in them, but they do make a difference.

**Barretta, Gene. *Now and Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin*. New York: Holt, 2006.**

You may know that Ben Franklin discovered electricity with his kite. But that isn’t all he did. Without Benjamin Franklin’s inventions, we would be missing many more things from modern life, like second hands on clocks, writing desks, post offices, hospitals, and libraries. Without Franklin’s inventive mind, we might even be missing our country.

**Bolden, Tonya. *Maritcha: A Nineteenth-Century American Girl*. New York: Abrams, 2005.**

Maritcha Lyons was born a free, but she still had to face many challenges. Maritcha was a wonderful student at Providence High School and school’s first African American graduate. She went on to become a teacher and eventually a vice principal at school for mixed races.

**Fleishman, Sid. *The Trouble Begins at 8: A Life of Mark Twain in the Wild, Wild West*. New York: HarperCollins, 2008.**

Before he took on the penname Mark Twain, Samuel Clemens dabbled in many areas: river boat piloting, reporting, and even mining for gold. He loved cheap cigars and in his old age dressed entirely in white suits. Mark Twain gave oratory lectures, incorporating humor long before the days of stand-up comedy. When asked about his life, Mark Twain answered in the same manner in which he wrote, beginning with a grain of truth and expanding from there.

**Freedman, Russell. *The Voice That Challenged a Nation: Marion Anderson and the Struggle for Equal Rights*. New York: Clarion, 2004.**

As a child, Marion Anderson began her professional career singing quarters at community events, but one day there would be those who found her voice so powerful it was worth fighting for. One day when she was told she could not sing at Constitution Hall because she was an African America, she would sing on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial instead.

**Kerley, Barbara. *Walt Whitman: Words for America*. New York: Scholastic, 2004.**

Walt Whitman’s passion for words began when he was just a child, and he really tried to paint pictures of the American people in his poems. What many people don’t know is that although Walt Whitman was too old to fight in the Civil War, he found another way to serve his country – caring for wounded soldiers.

**Morrison, Toni. *Remember: The Journey to School Integration*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.**

There was a time when African Americans had separate entrances for restaurants and movie theaters. They used separate water fountains. Worst of all, their children attended separate schools with almost no supplies. In 1954, when the Supreme Court said all students should go to school together, many people were very angry. It took some very brave students to ensure that every child really had an equal opportunity to be educated.

**Reef, Catherine. *Ernest Hemingway: A Writer’s Life*. Boston, Clarion, 2009.**

Ernest Heminway’s mother had wanted another girl, so she dressed Ernest and his sister Marcelline alike. Ernest’s life continued to be interesting. He married four times and had three sons. He lived in Europe, Cuba, and the Florida Keys. His enjoyed attending bullfights and hunting, and his passion was writing. Ernest Hemingway always wrote in simple sentences, and they earned him the Nobel Prize in Literature.

**Rumford, James. *Sequoyah: The Cherokee Man******Who Gave His People Writing*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.**

The giant redwood trees of California were named for the Cherokee man Sequoyah because of his giant accomplishment. Sequoyah was an ordinary man who couldn’t read any English, but wanted to give his people a written voice. Despite being teased and harassed Sequoyah dedicated himself to making a Cherokee alphabet. Though their land was taken from them, the Cherokee people maintained their words and memories because of him.

**Sís, Peter. *The Wall: Growing Up Behind the Iron Curtain*. New York: Frances Foster, 2007.**

As a child on the Communist side of the Cold War, artist Peter Sís could draw what he anything he liked at home but not at school. Communism is a type of government based around everyone being the same. At school Peter had to be like everyone else; he thought this was normal. Then, he found out what the government was keeping from the people – the freedom to express their own ideas and even the freedom to listen to rock and roll.

**Weatherford, Carole Boston. *Before John Was a Jazz Giant: A Song of John Coltrane*. New York: Holt, 2008.**

Before John Coltrane became a famous jazz saxophonist, he was a kid like you. John always loved sounds; he heard music all around him. What made John Coltrane so special was that he listened – to everything.

**Clements, Andrew. *Dogku*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2007.**

Short, three-line Haiku poems tell the story of a lovable stray dog. When he shows up on the front porch of a family’s home, Mom feeds him and gives him a bath. The three kids love him right away and name him Mooch. But Mooch gets into a bit of trouble while he is home alone. Will Dad let him stay?

**Fleischman, Paul. *Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices*. New York: Charlotte Zolotow, 1988.**

What could be better than reading poems about bugs? The answer is: two people reading poems about bugs – out loud. You’ll say different things at different times and the same things at the same time. But the trickiest will be saying different things at the same time. Explore what it’s like to be a pair of grasshoppers, fireflies, whirligig beetles, or more.

**Prelutsky, Jack. *Behold the Bold Umbrellaphant and Other Poems*. New York: Greenwillow, 2006.**

Wild animals combine with everyday household objects to make interesting creatures and really cool poems. Imagine a world where elephants have umbrellas attached to their trunks, and birds are shaped like spatulas. Panthers have thermometers for tails, and hippos have only zippers keeping their insides inside.

**Prelutsky, Jack. *Scranimals*. New York: Greenwillow, 2002.**

Where might one find such unusual animals as potatoads, hippopotamushrooms, and broccolions? Two children use a scooter and an umbrella to sail away to Scranimal Island, where they encounter just such scrambled combination creatures.

**Thomas, Joyce Carol. *The Blacker the Berry*. New York: Joanna Cotler, 2008.**

Oftentimes African Americans are called “black.” But not every African American child is the same exact color. They have a wide range of skin colors – as many colors as there are delicious, vibrant berries in the world. Every color is unique, and every shade is beautiful.