100 Titles for Reading and Sharing | 2011

New York Public Library
Introduction

As librarians shared this year’s newest books with the children in their local libraries, it became clear that the old adage—the more things change, the more they stay the same—is truer than ever. From Xboxes to iPads, from Wii consoles to the hottest apps, technology ages in a blink of an eye, but the timelessness of a good tale will always engage even the most tech-savvy child. Stories celebrating the natural curiosity of young toddlers, great feats of derring-do, and the joyous homecoming of a parent, alongside tales of bravery in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds—leavened with a dash of humor—were what held sway this year.

As you peruse this list, feel free to immerse yourself in these favorites of 2011 as selected by the staff of The New York Public Library.

Committee:
Jenny Berggren, Elizabeth Bird, Clarissa Cooke, Katie Crook, Ryan Donovan, Ricca Gaus, Rebecca Gueorguiev, Tiffany James, Louise Lareau, Sarah McDonald, Robyn Mutnick, Danita Nichols, Theresa Panza, Kristy Raffensberger, Jill Rothstein, Amy Schaub, Stephanie Whelan, and Sue Yee. Dina Brasseur and Jeanne Lamb, chairs.
**Picture Books**

FOR CHILDREN AGES 2–6

- **A Ball for Daisy** by Chris Raschka. *Schwartz & Wade*. Young children will feel a puppy’s heartbreak at the loss of a beloved ball and enjoy the simple delights that new friends can bring.

- **Betty Bunny Loves Chocolate Cake** by Michael B. Kaplan. Illustrated by Stephane Jorisch. *Dial*. A new obsession with chocolate cake leads to gooey disaster for a young *hare-oïne* who really just cannot wait for dessert.


- **Cloudette** by Tom Lichtenheld. *Henry Holt and Co*. It’s hard to be small. Cartoon drawings bring to life one cloud’s courageous journey to find her place in the big, big world.

- **Do You Know Which Ones Will Grow?** by Susan A. Shea. Illustrated by Tom Slaughter. *Blue Apple Books*. “If a duckling grows and becomes a duck, can a car grow and become...a truck?” Bright, simple pictures with plenty of holes and flaps illustrate this concept book.

- **A Dog Is a Dog** by Stephen Shaskan. *Chronicle Books*. A dog is a dog unless it’s a...cat! Or a squid! Or a moose! Silly surprises abound as a canine plays dress up.

- **Everything Goes on Land** by Brian Biggs. *Balzer & Bray*. A trip to the city takes a father and son past fleets of cars and trucks, a construction site, and a train yard. Fantastically crowded city scenes create a visual treasure hunt for younger children.

- **Grandpa Green** by Lane Smith. *Roaring Brook Press*. An old man’s beautifully sculpted garden preserves a lifetime of memories in this poignant, intergenerational tour through Grandpa’s life.

- **Hugs from Pearl** by Paul Schmid. *HarperCollins*. Pearl the Porcupine loves to give hugs, but her quills make it hard to be friendly. Pictures done in soft pastel colors add to the cozy mood.

- **I Want My Hat Back** by Jon Klassen. *Candlewick*. A sly whodunit, with just desserts. “Don’t ask me any more questions!”

- **Little White Rabbit** by Kevin Henkes. *Greenwillow Books*. A thoughtful rabbit wonders what it would be like to be a rock, a butterfly, and other things he sees on his walk. Toddlers will love playing along with this meditative book.

- **Me...Jane** by Patrick McDonnell. *Little, Brown Books for Young Readers*. This spare portrait of Jane Goodall, enhanced by photos and Goodall’s own drawings, is an engrossing look at how a child’s intense fascination with the natural world fueled a career as a famous animal researcher.

- **Mine!** by Shutta Crum. Illustrated by Patrice Barton. *Knopf Books for Young Readers*. Two toddlers and a puppy make glorious messes with toys and food in this one-word romp.

- **Mitchell’s License** by Hallie Durand. Illustrated by Tony Fucile. *Candlewick*. The only road to bed in this playful bedtime frolic is the one-way Daddy Express.


Octopus Soup by Mercer Mayer. Marshall Cavendish. A young octopus has a silly adventure on land in this wordless escapade with lively cartoon pictures.

Perfect Square by Michael Hall. Greenwillow Books. A resourceful paper square makes beautiful new forms after being torn into strips, poked full of holes, and cut into pieces. Vividly colored geometric illustrations add to the fun.


What Animals Really Like by Fiona Robinson. Abrams Books for Young Readers. Monkeys like to play, horses like fresh hay, worms like to wiggle, and warthogs like to... blow enormous bubbles? Hilariously detailed watercolors add to the whimsy.


Folktales and Fairy Tales

Ancient Egypt: Tales of Gods and Pharaohs by Marcia Williams. Candlewick. “In the beginning there was only the deep, dark water of Nun.” The ancient Egyptian world is retold in hieroglyphic-inspired illustrations paired with contemporary language that children of all ages will enjoy.

The Boy from the Dragon Palace by Margaret Read MacDonald. Illustrated by Sachiko Yoshikawa. Albert Whitman & Company. Can one small snot-nosed boy bring a poor flower seller some luck? This folktale from Japan serves as a cautionary tale about the dangers of being too greedy.

The Cazuela That the Farm Maiden Stirred by Samantha R. Vamos. Illustrated by Rafael López. Charlesbridge Publishing. Join the farm maiden and her animal friends in this bilingual celebration of food. Includes a Spanish-English glossary and a recipe.

Gifts from the Gods: Ancient Words and Wisdom from Greek and Roman Mythology by Lise Lunge-Larsen. Illustrated by Gareth Hinds. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children. Featuring the stories of Achilles, Muse, and Victory, this compilation of 17 Greek and Roman myths focuses on ancient heroes and sheds light on words and expressions that are still used today.


Rapunzel: Based on the Original Story by the Brothers Grimm retold and illustrated by Sarah Gibb. Albert Whitman & Company. If you’re looking for a beautiful rendition of the classic tale, look no further than this lushly illustrated version.

Tales from India: Stories of Creation and the Cosmos by Jamila Gavin. Illustrated by Amanda Hall. Templar. A masterful retelling of 10 classic Hindu creation myths. Each narrative is paired with compelling illustrations, whose interpretations honor the deities with a touch of contemporary flair.

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Poetry


Never Forgotten by Patricia C. McKissack. Illustrated by Leo Dillon and Diane Dillon. Schwartz & Wade. “We rarely speak of the Taken, / But I will, just once, / Because you asked.” Joy mixes with grief and sorrow as Wind brings news of a young boy, stolen by slavers, to his loving African father. A moving tale of the Middle Passage with majestic words and pictures.

Peaceful Pieces: Poems and Quilts About Peace by Anna Grossnickle Hines. Henry Holt and Co. Hines’s vibrant quilt art perfectly complements her reflections on all states of peacefulness, from harmony between siblings in “Sure Cure” to finding inner tranquility in “Calming the Busy Brain.”

Won Ton: A Cat Tale Told in Haiku by Lee Wardlaw. Illustrated by Eugene Yelchín. Henry Holt and Co. After being adopted from a shelter, a cat lets his new family know who is boss. Will he ever trust them enough to share his real name?

Stories

FOR CHILDREN AGES 6–8


EllRay Jakes Is Not a Chicken (and EllRay Jakes Is a Rock Star) by Sally Warner. Illustrated by Jamie Harper. Viking. EllRay Jakes handles everything from a bully at school to accidentally giving away part of his father’s prized crystal collection. Can he avoid getting into trouble with the kids and adults in his life?

The Great Hamster Massacre by Katie Davies. Illustrated by Hannah Shaw. Beach Lane Books. Siblings Anna and Tom conduct an investigation after their new pets go missing. Warning: Many hamsters were harmed in the making of this story!
Like Pickle Juice on a Cookie by Julie Sternberg. Illustrated by Matthew Cordell. Amulet Books. Eleanor has had a bad August—bad like pickle juice on a cookie. Her longtime nanny, Bibi, has moved away and been replaced with Natalie, who is NOT the same.

Marty McGuire by Kate Messner. Illustrated by Brian Floca. Scholastic. Princesses? Ew! Marty would rather catch frogs than wear tiaras, but when she’s cast as a princess in a class production of The Frog Prince, she finds a way to combine the things she loves with the things she detests.

The No. 1 Car Spotter by Atinuke. Illustrated by Warwick Johnson Cadwell. Kane/Miller. Oluwalase Babalunde Benson (aka No. 1) and his friend Coca-Cola pitch in whenever a problem needs to be solved. Vibrant spot illustrations enliven this collection of witty and whimsical short stories.

Spunky Tells All by Ann Cameron. Illustrated by Lauren Castillo. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Spunky’s owners, the Bateses, have never learned to speak dog, so he tells us his story from his own perspective. When his family brings home Fiona, a clumsy cat, Spunky must learn to get along with her and communicate better with his humans.


Graphic


Bad Island by Doug TenNapel. GRAPHIX. Shipwrecked on a mysterious island, Reese and his family have heart-pounding adventures dodging strange creatures as they unravel the mystery of an ancient artifact.


Hera: The Goddess and Her Glory by George O’Connor. First Second. “In all the cosmos there is only one being that Zeus, the king of the gods, is afraid of....”

Nursery Rhyme Comics: 50 Timeless Rhymes from 50 Celebrated Cartoonists by Various authors with an introduction by Leonard S. Marcus. First Second. In this graphic version of the nursery rhymes we all know and love, 50 artists add many more than 50 twists to the familiar stories.

Sidekicks by Dan Santat. Arthur A. Levine Books. When superhumans can’t save the day, who do you turn to? Captain Amazing’s pets Metal Mutt, Static Cat, Shifty the chameleon, and Fluffy!

Zita the Spacegirl by Ben Hatke. First Second. Reluctant hero Zita and her rabble-rousing crew of cosmic misfits are on a mission to rescue her missing friend and find a way back home.
Stories
FOR CHILDREN AGES 9–12

An Elephant in the Garden by Michael Morpurgo. *Feiwel & Friends.* When Dresden is bombed during World War II, the animals in the zoo are endangered. Lizzie and her family rescue beloved elephant Marlene while keeping away from the invading army.

Breadcrumbs by Anne Ursu. Illustrated by Erin McGuire. *Walden Pond Press.* In this updated take on Hans Christian Andersen’s *The Snow Queen*, Hazel must rescue her best friend, Jack, from an unfamiliar land...whether he wants to be rescued or not.

The Chronicles of Harris Burdick: Fourteen Amazing Authors Tell the Tales with an introduction by Lemony Snicket by Chris Van Allsburg. *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.* A gaggle of authors carry readers into the creepy and unusual when they write stories to match 14 mysterious illustrations left by a mythical illustrator.

City of Orphans by Avi. Illustrated by Greg Ruth. *Atheneum/Richard Jackson Books.* When newsie Maks Geless’s sister is framed for a burglary at The Waldorf, where she works, he teams up with a tough orphan girl to solve the mystery. Set in 1893 New York City.

The Floating Islands by Rachel Neumeier. *Knopf Books for Young Readers.* Determined to become one of the Kajuraihi—men who use dragon magic to fly on the wind—Trei undergoes serious training while his cousin Aranè disguises herself as a boy to gain entrance to the secret school for mages.

Fly Trap by Frances Hardinge. *HarperCollins.* Young orphan Mosca Mye, her psychotic goose, and her con-man sidekick are trapped in a town where nighttime brings deadly dangers and leaving costs money she doesn’t have. A suspenseful sequel to *Fly By Night.*

The Fourth Stall by Chris Rylander. *Walden Pond Press.* Do you need something? Sixth-graders Mac and Vince can get just about anything for you—for a small fee. Everything changes, however, when a nasty teen named Staples takes over the school with an illegal gambling ring. A raucous daredevil ride.

Ghetto Cowboy by G. Neri. Illustrated by Jesse Joshua Watson. *Candlewick.* When Trane’s mom ships him off to Philadelphia to live with the father he doesn’t know, he doesn’t expect to find a horse in the house and a stable in the yard.

The Girl Who Circumnavigated Fairyland in a Ship of Her Own Making by Catherynne M. Valente. Illustrated by Ana Juan. *Feiwel & Friends.* “Once upon a time, a girl named September grew very tired indeed of her parents’ house...” Taken to a magical land by Green Wind, September must find a way to defeat Fairyland’s evil ruler.

Hound Dog True by Linda Urban. *Harcourt Children’s Books.* Mattie Breen is so shy, she would rather be her uncle Potluck’s custodial apprentice at school than the new girl in class *yet again.* With only a week before school starts, can she learn to come out of her shell?

Icefall by Matthew J. Kirby. *Scholastic Press.* No one ever notices Solveig. No one at all. But when she and her siblings are sent by their father, the king, to an abandoned fjord in the company of his dangerous bezerker bodyguards, she finds that she is the only one who can solve the mystery of the traitor in their midst.

Inside Out and Back Again by Thanhha Lai. *HarperCollins.* When Ha and her family relocate from Vietnam to Alabama in 1975, she discovers her family’s inner strength despite the challenges of a new language, culture shock, and the neighborhood bully.

Jefferson’s Sons by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley. *Dial.* Imagine if your father owned you. Told through the eyes of two of Thomas Jefferson’s children with the slave Sally Hemings, this novel presents history in a way never before seen in fiction for children.

Junonia by Kevin Henkes. *Greenwillow Books.* Every year, Alice loves to spend her birthday with her favorite people at Sanibel Island, but this year everything is changing and she doesn’t like it.

The Luck of the Buttons by Anne Ylvisaker. *Candlewick.* When a smooth-talking con man slides into small-town Iowa, it’s up to Tugs Button, a girl with a family that can’t do anything right, to save everyone she knows from ruin.
**A Monster Calls** by Patrick Ness. Illustrated by Jim Kay. *Candlewick.*
Every night at 12:07 the monster comes. Only Conor can see it and hear the stories it tells. And only Conor can give it the one thing it wants: the truth.

**The Mostly True Story of Jack** by Kelly Barnhill. *Little, Brown Books for Young Readers.* Jack is in a new place with new problems, among them a bully named Clayton and parents who can’t seem to remember who he is. But not everything is as it seems, and as the surreal landscape of Hazelwood begins to unravel, Jack must discover his place in the world.

**Okay for Now** by Gary D. Schmidt. *Clarion Books.* Doug would rather be anywhere but the crummy small town his family has moved to. Then he discovers an old book in the library and learns he might be more than the loser his father makes him out to be.

**Six Days** by Philip Webb. *The Chicken House.* In a future London, the city is being dismantled brick by brick in search of a precious artifact. Cass and Wilbur team up with two mysterious strangers in a race against time to save the world.

**Tall Story** by Candy Gourlay. *David Fickling Books.* Andi is meeting her Filipino half-brother Bernardo for the first time. When she sees him, she can hardly believe her eyes—he’s eight feet tall! The only thing more unbelievable is his story.

**The Unforgotten Coat** by Frank Cottrell Boyce. *Candlewick.* Is there really a demon tracking Chingis and Nergui that can make them disappear? When Julie meets two boys from Mongolia who claim they’re escaping from such a creature, she finds that being their “good guide” means separating fact from fiction.

**The Wickedest Witch** by Martin Howard. Illustrated by Colin Stimpson. *Pavilion.* Nasty, warty witch Esmelia Sniff takes on a young apprentice to help her win the title of Supreme High Witch (and to fatten up a tasty dinner). But the surprisingly talented orphan Sam has other plans.

**Wonderstruck** by Brian Selznick. *Scholastic Press.* In two intertwining stories—one told in words and the other only in pictures—an orphan and a lonely deaf girl find common ground in New York City despite very different lives and experiences.

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**Nonfiction**


**All the Way to America: The Story of a Big Italian Family and a Little Shovel** by Dan Yaccarino. *Knopf Books for Young Readers.* This tale of a treasured heirloom passed down from father to son through four generations will have children asking “Where did our family come from?”

**Amelia Lost: The Life and Disappearance of Amelia Earhart** by Candace Fleming. *Schwartz & Wade.* This illuminating glimpse into the life of this complex heroine separates fact from myth. Chapters of her biography alternate with accounts from search teams and those who listened to her pleas for help on their radios.

**America Is Under Attack: September 11, 2001: The Day the Towers Fell** by Don Brown. *Flash Point.* Brown’s sensitive account of the 9/11 tragedy is based on the experiences of eyewitnesses and those who knew them. Watercolors and pencil drawings balance emotional power with a gentleness appropriate for exploring the subject with younger children.
Balloons Over Broadway: The True Story of the Puppeteer of Macy’s Parade by Melissa Sweet. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children. Meet Tony Sarg, a kid who constructs a chicken-feeding contraption to get out of doing his chores, and grows up to create the very first giant balloons for the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade.

The Boy Who Bit Picasso by Antony Penrose. Abrams Books for Young Readers. An iconic artist is introduced to young readers through a friend’s childhood memories. Includes original artwork and never-before-seen family photographs.

Bugs by the Numbers by Sharon Werner and Sarah Forss. Blue Apple Books. Like bugs? Like numbers? Find out plenty about both as insect facts—many hidden beneath flaps—surround large images of cockroaches and other creepy crawlies cleverly constructed from numerals.

Can We Save the Tiger? by Martin Jenkins. Illustrated by Vicky White. Candlewick. Big, powerful pencil-and-oil portraits of some of the world’s rarest animals are paired with a conservationist’s inspiring plea to care for our vanishing wildlife.


Coral Reefs by Jason Chin. Flash Point. A young girl gets a close-up look at an endangered ecosystem when she is suddenly “transported” from The New York Public Library to a city under the sea. Imaginative pictures accompany the clear, factual text.

Drawing from Memory by Allen Say. Scholastic Press. An autobiographical account of the Japanese author’s artistic journey from childhood on, interspersed with photographs, sketches, ink drawings, and cartoons.

Energy Island: How One Community Harnessed the Wind and Changed Their World by Allan Drummond. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. A true story of how the children and adults of a windy small town ended their dependence on nonrenewable energy sources. An engaging case study, with lively cartoon pictures, about learning to work together to make a greener planet.

Heart and Soul: The Story of America and African Americans by Kadir Nelson. Balzer & Bray. A fictionalized narrator weaves together both the well-known and lesser-known events of the African American experience in the United States from Colonial times to the Civil Rights era. Lushly illustrated with oil portraits and landscapes.

In Search of Sasquatch: An Exercise in Zoological Evidence by Kelly Milner Halls. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children. Do you believe? Yeti, Bigfoot, Sasquatch—are all the footprints, recordings, and hundreds of reported encounters nothing but wishful thinking? Here’s a lively gathering of interviews, photos, and other evidence. You decide!

Into the Unknown: How Explorers Found Their Way by Land, Sea, and Air by Stewart Ross. Illustrated by Stephen Biesty. Candlewick. These 14 true tales of travelers, from ancient Greek sailors to men on the moon, will take readers around the world and beyond. Many fold-out diagrams provide inside views of explorers’ ships and gear along with finely detailed route maps.

Meadowlands: A Wetlands Survival Story by Thomas F. Yezerski. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Despite being misused for centuries as home to chemical factories and garbage dumps, the wetlands of New Jersey remain a living, complex ecosystem. An inspiring tribute to nature’s resilience, illustrated with accurately detailed overhead and close-up views of the landscape and its wildlife.

The Mysteries of Angkor Wat by Richard Sobol. Candlewick. A photographer searches for clues that link an ancient civilization with present-day Cambodian culture and makes an unexpected discovery with the help of local children.

Rah, Rah, Radishes!: A Vegetable Chant by April Pulley Sayre. Beach Lane Books. “Oh boy, bok choy! / Brussels sprouts! / Broccoli. Cauliflower. / Shout it out!” Mouthwatering close-up color photos take very young children on a rollicking ride through the produce stand.
Queen of the Falls by Chris Van Allsburg. Houghton Mifflin Books for Children. Would you dare go over Niagara Falls in a barrel? Annie Edson Taylor, the first person to do so, threw caution to the wind and survived to tell the tale.


The Watcher: Jane Goodall’s Life with the Chimps by Jeanette Winter. Schwartz & Wade. This natural follow-up to Me...Jane (in the Picture Books section) focuses on Jane Goodall’s adult life and experiences as she pursued her dream career helping chimps in Africa and became a renowned environmental activist.

Wheels of Change: How Women Rode the Bicycle to Freedom (With a Few Flat Tires Along the Way) by Sue Macy. National Geographic Children’s Books. “To men, the bicycle in the beginning was merely a new toy...to women, it was a steed upon which they rode into a new world.” This engaging account of the intertwined history of bicycles and women’s rights is embellished with historical photographs and documents.

Witches! The Absolutely True Tale of Disaster in Salem by Rosalyn Schanzer. National Geographic Children’s Books. Immerse yourself in the world of 1600s Salem with this revealing portrait of the famous, tragic community. Spooky red-and-black scratchboard artwork adds an eerie note to this unusually objective and detailed account.


Acknowledgments

