Outstanding Books Reviewed in This Issue

Interrupted: a life beyond words, by Rachel Coker.

Electrical wizard: how Nikola Tesla lit up the world, by Elizabeth Rusch, illustrated by Oliver Dominguez.

A lady at Willowgrove Hall, by Sarah E. Ladd.
A Letter from the Publisher

Dear CLJ Readers:

We bring you this issue of CLJ in the midst of the busy Christmas season. This is a time for joy and peace, but all too often our lives are overtaken by stress and fatigue. I pray that God will grant us all the wisdom to discover ways to slow down and experience the wonders of His love.

We at CLJ hope to contribute to the joys of this season by leading you to some great reading—perhaps even books that would make fine gifts for someone special on your list. Although the titles reviewed are not Christmas books per se, many point the way to the One who holds the true meaning of Christmas—Jesus Christ Himself, who was born as a vulnerable human in order to give us the greatest gift of all. Seek Jesus and you can have Christmas everyday!

May you experience newfound joy in the Lord and enjoy a most blessed Christmas with your loved ones.

In Christ,
Angela Walsh
Co-Publisher and Editor

www.christianlibraryj.org

The purpose of the Christian Library Journal is to provide reviews from a Christian point of view, of both Christian and secular titles for the Christian reader. Materials reviewed may reflect a broad range of Christian doctrinal positions and do not necessarily reflect the views of Christian Library Journal.

The Core Collection, under construction, is a help for parents, teachers, librarians, and others in choosing the best books for the children and teens in their care. And when finished, for new schools, will be a major reference source for building a new library.

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Taken from Interrupted: a life beyond words by Rachel Coker. Copyright © 2012 by Rachel Coker. Used by permission of Zondervan. www.zondervan.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Key to Reviews ................................................................. 5
Children’s Titles .......................................................... 15
Teen Titles ................................................................. 25
Adult Titles ............................................................... 23

Core Collection (CC)
Children’s Titles ......................................................... 32
Teen Titles ............................................................... 36
Adult Titles ............................................................... 39

Index ........................................................................... 40
Review Rating System

*5 Outstanding — a book which impacts someone’s life or thinking
   5 Excellent — well written, among the best
   4 Very good — definitely worth reading
   3 Good — may be a good source for relaxation or to meet needs for information
   2 Fair — poor writing or editing; read only if very interested
   1 Poor — not much going for this title.

Recommended with caution (may be used with any of the above ratings) – Note reservations within the review.
Not recommended (may be used with any of the above ratings) – Note problems within the review.

Value of the book:
With fiction, the rating includes the quality of plot development/pacing, characterization, sense of time and place, mood, and atmosphere, dialogue, depth of perception, sensitivity of writing, use of humor. Be aware that some books are character driven, so character development is extremely important. Others are plot driven, so character development isn’t as critical; plot is.

With nonfiction, the rating includes quality of the information, accuracy, up to date, stimulates further inquiry, adds to the understanding of the topic, illustrations which are informative and appropriate.

With picture books, first be aware that these are written today for various age groups, so don’t assume little children. The rating includes those above for fiction and nonfiction, and also emphasizes the illustrations.

Commonly used abbreviations in CLJ reviews

<table>
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<tr>
<th>LCCN</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Canadian Library Cataloging Number</td>
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Primary Fiction

Fox's garden / Princesse Camcam. (Stories without words)
LCCN 2014934817 ISBN 9781592701674, hardcover, $14.95.
1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 16 x 27 cm. Grades PS-2
E Rating: 5

By the light of a crescent moon, a lone fox approaches a warmly lit village on a winter evening. Chased off by two adults, the fox retreats to a nearby greenhouse. A young boy follows, bringing a basket of treats that will prompt a surprising gift in return. Fox's Garden is one of Enchanted Lion's “Stories Without Words.”

The caring and trusting nature of a child are paid forward in this tender story. Told entirely through its pictures, Fox's Garden shows how a little compassion can have lovely and unexpected consequences. Children will enjoy “telling” the tale as they view the expressive and detailed illustrations.

Fox's Garden is appealing on many levels, including its narrow size for small hands. Princesse Camcam (her name is explained on the book jacket!) draws a world softly muted by snow. Her two-page illustrations are wonderfully inviting, with grays and blues punctuated by the red fox and the boy's red clothing. The illuminated scenes actually seem to emit a glow, whether from a hall light shining into the boy's bedroom or snow crystals catching the moonlight.

Recommended for preschoolers and above, Fox's Garden is charming, memorable, and likely to become a favorite for sharing.

Nina Ditmar, CLJ

Whatever you grow up to be / Karen Kingsbury.
Zonderkidz, 2014.
1 v. : col. ill. ; 29 cm. Grades K-2
E Rating: 5


Told in gentle rhyming verse and punctuated by scripture, Whatever You Grow Up to Be captures the wonder and faith of parents as they watch their child grow into manhood. The message in the uplifting narrative is reassuringly simple: that God has a path for our lives. Cheerful kid-appealing illustrations by Valeria Docampo show a baby boy passing through familiar milestones on his way to becoming a father himself. Footprints used in many of the scenes cleverly evoke an ongoing journey.

Whatever You Grow Up to Be would make a calming bedtime read-aloud or a sweet gift for new parents. Biblical quotes are taken from the New International Version.

Nina Ditmar, CLJ

A good home for Max / Junzo Terada.
**A Good Home for Max** features store mouse, Tabi. Tabi lives in a small store and comes out of his cubbyhole each night to clean and straighten and clean. One night he realizes that Max the toy dog remains on the shelf even though the other toys are selling. Tabi decides to make sure that Max finds a good home. He befriends Max. He worries about his finding a good home. And then the day comes when Tabi worries because Max is missing.

Author/illustrator Junzo Terada writes a sweet story about the importance of looking out for one's friends. The writing is simple, yet descriptive. Terada's artwork features muted colors. The toys, buildings, and store goods are simple shapes in solid colors, yet he also mixes in elements of graphic design for the flooring, curtains, or walls on most pages. The illustrations depict Tabi the mouse as well as his toy friends and other items in the store and in Tabi's world. Though the story is in English, the labels on the illustrations are all in French. The drawings reflect the simplicity of the writing, and they are sweet and fun.

*Kristina Wolcott, CLJ*

**Primary Nonfiction**

**Jesus** / written by Anselm Grün ; illustrated by Giuliano Ferri ; translated by Laura Watkinson.

Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2014.

LCCN 2013033290 ISBN 9780802854384, hardcover, $16.

1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 cm. Grades K-2

The book *Jesus* relates the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ through a series of illustrated biblical stories retold by German Benedictine monk Anselm Grün and translated into English by Laura Watkinson.

Readers acquainted with the Bible will recognize and enjoy the familiar New Testament stories, parables, and miracles, told in fluid conversational language. For children newly exposed to the Bible, *Jesus* offers a good introduction to key events and characters such as Mary, Zacchaeus, and Judas. Pastoral watercolors by Giuliano Ferri show traditional renderings in a warm and rich palette. The expressive illustrations capture Jesus’s love and compassion in vibrant two-page scenes.

*Jesus* would be a cherished home library addition and a wonderful way to encourage children to revisit and remember these timeless stories.

*Nina Ditmar, CLJ*

**Mr. Ferris and his wheel** / by Kathryn G. Davis.


1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 27 cm. Grades K-4

791.06 Rating: 5

Thirty-four year old George Washington Gale Ferris Jr. designs a spectacle for the 1893 Chicago World's Fair: a “Monster Wheel” to transport passengers on an amazing ride. Though he is an engineer with knowledge of steel and mechanics, George’s idea is met with skepticism and scorn. With the fair just months
away, will George be able to overcome a lack of financing, difficult winter weather, and even quicksand to complete his project? *Mr. Ferris and His Wheel* recounts George’s vision and perseverance in creating the iconic attraction that now bears his name.

This handsome picture book biography by Kathryn Gibbs Davis is gifted with a noteworthy historical topic, an intriguing main character, a suspenseful plot, interesting technical details, and wonderful artwork. Quotes from primary sources help to introduce the ambitious inventor, and smaller paragraphs outside the main storyline provide additional facts to curious young readers.

Gilbert Ford captures all the action and elements of the time period in muted ink and watercolor. The heavy matte pages are the perfect medium for the artist’s thick outlines and bold scenes, which charmingly convey the excitement of experiencing “twenty glorious airborne minutes in motion” aboard the elegant wheel.

Though intended for ages 4-8, *Mr. Ferris and His Wheel* would be an enjoyable and informative read for all ages! The end pages provide quote sources, a selected bibliography, suggested websites, and a photograph of the distinguished Mr. Ferris.

*Nina Ditmar, CLJ*

**The Mayflower / by Mark Greenwood ; illustrated by Frane Lessac.**

Holiday House, 2014.

LCCN 2013011144   ISBN 9780823429431, hardcover, $16.95.

38 p. : col. ill. ; 29 cm. Grades K-3

In 1620 the Pilgrims embark on a 65-day journey to the New World in search of religious freedom. On the crowded voyage they encounter many hardships, including a storm, damage to the ship, and sickness. *The Mayflower* is a picture book account of their trip across the Atlantic Ocean and the challenges and rewards that await them on the other side.

Mark Greenwood’s *The Mayflower* contains all the elements of the traditional Pilgrim story: the exodus of the Puritans, the dangerous passage, the writing of the Mayflower Compact, the trials of the settlers’ first winter, and their later encounters with the helpful Wampanoag Indians. The book’s final scene depicts the Pilgrims and Indians sharing an autumn feast.

This enjoyable book has just the right blend of story and historical information for primary grade readers. There is a concise explanation of why the Puritans left England and how they managed on a ship crowded with people, animals, and goods, and of their difficulties at sea and later in their new settlement. The vivid gouache illustrations by Frané Lessac have a folk art appeal, with bold two-page scenes that fuel the imagination. Features such as the characters’ clothing, tools, homes, maps, and lanterns provide a rich mosaic of the period.

A time line indicates relevant dates, including the eventual (1941) establishment of the Thanksgiving holiday celebrated today. Numerous resources are referenced, including educational materials from Plimouth Plantation.

*Nina Ditmar, CLJ*

**Telephone / by Mac Barnett ; illustrated**
by Jen Corace.
1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 22 x 27 cm. Grades PS-3
E Rating: 4
It's the old game of telephone, and preschoolers will find it hilarious. It starts when a mother bird gives a message for her little Peter to come home for supper. Sending this through the bird next to her on the telephone line starts a garbled series of communications, all understood according to the interests of each particular bird. Of course, in the end, readers will be gratified to see Peter receiving the correct message from Mom and on his way home to eat. The illustrations are very colorful and creative, and the variety of birds depicted (toucan, cardinal, turkey, duck, to name a few) just adds to the fun.
Ceil Carey, CLJ

Fall leaves / by Loretta Holland ; illustrated by Elly MacKay.
1 v. : col. ill. ; 24 x 29 cm. Grades PS-4
E Rating: 5
In Loretta Holland’s Fall Leaves, two children experience nature’s seasonal changes as summer gives way to autumn. Colorful trees, cooler days, longer nights, migrating birds, hibernating plants and animals, and the harvest of many foods signify the arrival of fall in the Northern Hemisphere. Fall Leaves playfully refers to both the departure of the season and the dropping of leaves from the trees. Loretta Holland provides a bold, simple script for preschoolers (“Leaves Twist”, “Apples Fall”) that matches each opposing full-page illustration. Read aloud, the words take on a soothing and rhythmic quality. For older readers (and as a helpful refresher for adults!), the author offers a more detailed explanation of why the cycle of seasons results in the changes we see.
Paper artist Elly MacKay uses a combination of ink, synthetic paper, light, and photography to create her lovely scenes. The blurred edges of each picture give the effect of peering in on a miniature world. Reds, yellows, and browns highlight the beauty of fall as the young boy and girl play and explore. Effective lighting and careful details in each picture capture the transition from fall to winter until the final scene depicts the children in the snow, hinting that each ending yields a new beginning. Fall Leaves concludes with instructions for an easy fall craft activity. The varied content level and sophistication of the artwork should help position this book among annual favorites in home, school, and library settings.
Nina Ditmar, CLJ

Intermediate Fiction

I survived the shark attacks of 1916 / by Lauren Tarshis ; illustrated by Scott Dawson. (I survived series; 1)
Scholastic Press, 2010.
The “I Survived” series by Lauren Tarshis comprises compelling fiction aimed at 9-12 year olds. Most of these books are historical fiction (based on events that happened more than 50 years ago), but a few are based on more recent events, making them realistic fiction.

In *The Shark Attacks of 1916*, Chet Roscow hears about a great white shark attacking swimmers along the Jersey shore. As the shark attacks continue, fear rises in the residents, even though they are seventy miles south of the attacks.
Surely Chet is safe when he swims in Matawan Creek—or is he?

George Caulder and his younger sister Phoebe are sailing with their aunt in *The Sinking of The Titanic, 1912*. George meets the Titanic's designer, who tells him about the escape ladders on the starboard side. Will George remember this when the Titanic begins to sink?

Barry Tucker’s family attempts to evacuate New Orleans in *Hurricane Katrina, 2005*. Barry's younger sister gets sick, and they return home. When the levee breaks, water comes rushing in the front door. They climb onto the roof to escape the flooding, but Barry falls off. Will he be rescued?

Lucas Calley skips school in *The Attacks of September 11, 2001* to visit his dad’s best friend, a fireman in New York City. The World Trade Center is just blocks from Uncle Benny’s fire station. Lucas sees an airplane flying too low, headed for the Twin Towers. Will he see ever Uncle Benny again?

Danny and his mother move to Hawaii from New York City in *The Bombing of Pearl Harbor, 1941*. Danny is unhappy and plans to stowaway on the next ship to America. Danny witness Japanese airplanes flying overhead. What will happen as the bombs get closer?

Leo is a newsboy in *The San Francisco Earthquake, 1906*. His job gives him the freedom to roam the city. Leo is bullied by some other boys and robbed of a valuable gold nugget. In the middle of another confrontation with the bullies, the ground starts to shake violently, and everyone’s life is changed.

Thomas and his sister Birdie are runaway slaves who join a Union army unit in *The Battle of Gettysburg, 1863*. Thomas saves the life of an army colonel, who allows them to stay with his unit. When the unit is ordered to Gettysburg, they are caught in the middle of the battle. Will Thomas and Birdie be returned to their owner?

Eleven-year-old Ben Kudo and his family visit his uncle in *The Japanese Tsunami, 2011*. There is an earthquake, causing their uncle’s house to collapse. They escape but see the tsunami heading towards them. They cannot outrun it, and Ben is separated from his family. Will they find another alive after the tsunami?

Max Rosen and his younger sister Zena live in a Polish ghetto, struggling to survive after their father is arrested by Nazi soldiers in *The Nazi Invasion, 1944*. They run away and hide on a farm. Max and Zena join others trying to hide from the Nazis as they bomb the forest. Will they survive the Nazi invasion?

*The Destruction of Pompeii, AD 79* finds eleven-year-old Marcus and his father in slavery; they end up running away. To avoid the slave hunters, they climb the mountain outside the city. When Mt. Vesuvius starts to rumble, they try to warn the residents of Pompeii about the impending doom, but will they be in time?

Lauren Tarshis takes historical fiction to a new level. The books are well-researched and well-written. Each title in the series is filled with details about a disaster from the point of view of a child who is between the ages of 9 and 12. Each includes titles for further reading, as well as facts about the disaster. The next book is *The Great Chicago Fire, 1871* (February 2015).

Highly recommended for public and school libraries for boys and girls. These books fly off the shelves and are read eagerly by boys and
girls alike.

Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ

Intermediate Nonfiction

The answers book for kids: 22 questions from kids on Creation and the Fall / Ken Ham with Cindy Malott. (The answers book for kids; 1)

48 p. : col. ill. ; 16 cm. Grades 2-6

The answers book for kids: 22 questions from kids on dinosaurs and the flood of Noah / Ken Ham with Cindy Malott. (The answers book for kids; 2)

48 p. : col. ill. ; 16 cm. Grades 2-6

The answers book for kids: 22 questions from kids on God and the Bible / Ken Ham with Cindy Malott. (The answers book for kids; 3)

48 p. : col. ill. ; 16 cm. Grades 2-6

The answers book for kids: 22 questions from kids on sin, salvation, and the Christian life / Ken Ham with Cindy Malott. (The answers book for kids; 4)


The answers book for kids: 22 questions from kids on space and astronomy / Ken Ham with Cindy Malott. (The answers book for kids; 5)

48 p. : col. ill. ; 16 cm. Grades 2-6

The answers book for kids: 22 questions from kids on Babel and the Ice Age / Ken Ham with Cindy Malott. (The answers book for kids; 6)

48 p. : col. ill. ; 16 cm. Grades 2-6

The Answers Book for Kids is a six-volume series by Ken Ham, founder and CEO of Answers in Genesis and the Creation Museum. Each volume promises Bible-based answers to 20-22 questions from children on the topics of: Creation and the Fall; Dinosaurs and the Flood of Noah; God and the Bible; Sin, Salvation, and the Christian Life; Space and Astronomy; and Babel and the Ice Age.

The six small-format books in The Answers Book for Kids series are identically organized and creatively illustrated with photographs and an overall bright and kid-friendly design. The left side of each two-page spread poses a child’s question (complete with a photo, age, and first name of the child). The opposing page includes a related Bible verse (New King James version), the author’s answer to the question, and additional suggested scripture. The importance and truth of God’s Word are emphasized in a
letter to parents from Ken Ham at the beginning of each volume.

Adam and Eve, the age of the earth, evolution, Satan, heaven, the co-existence of dinosaurs and humans, the planets, and ethnicity are just a few of the many complex topics addressed in the volumes of The Answers Book for Kids. Many secular beliefs about history and the natural world are challenged, which is likely to prompt even more questions from young readers—and parents too—who may be unfamiliar with Ham’s "young Earth creationist" perspective.

*Nina Ditmar, CLJ*

**Jesus / Nancy I. Sanders. (Get to know series)**

Zonderkidz, 2014.


122 p. : col. ill. ; 19 cm. Grades 4-6

232.9 Rating: 4

*Jesus* by Nancy I. Sanders is part of the Get to Know series of biographies for young readers. It beautifully provides an historical account of not only Jesus’ earthly life, but also God’s plan from the beginning (Adam and Eve) to the end of times (Revelation), weaving archaeological evidence with the story of the Bible.

The theology is sound, although the first chapter is somewhat difficult to follow as the author attempts to simplify thousands of years of history and the story of sin and evil. Readers who are not familiar with the Old Testament or the full story of Jesus may find this section confusing.

A strong feature is the use of graphics throughout the book, including maps, photographs, and reproductions of religious masterpieces. Stylized sidebars–e.g., “Scripture,” “Bible Hero,” “Eyewitness Account,” “Did You Know?,” and “Word Bank”–positioned in each chapter provide additional information. Their design is reminiscent of a web page, making the book more user-friendly for today’s young reader. The “Word Bank” feature highlights not only religious terms (e.g., Messiah, repent), but also words used in our everyday language (e.g., insisted, obedient).

The writing is fourth- to fifth-grade level based on a Flesch scale, but with 12 well-defined chapters the book also makes an excellent read-aloud for younger children and provides good material for vocabulary building or a first book report assignment. The inclusion of a timeline, glossary, and bibliography makes it a good reference book for a child’s home library. Readers of Imagination Station, the popular Adventures in Odyssey series by Focus on the Family, may be enticed to read this Get to Know series (Sanders co-authored several of the later Imagination Station books). Common Core Standards are noted on the back, which may be helpful for schools and libraries that are participating in this program.

*Martha Jo Dendinger, CLJ*

**Greek myths / retold from the classic originals by Diane Namm ; illustrated by Eric Freeberg. (Classic starts series)**

Sterling, 2011.

LCCN 2010039803 ISBN 9781402773129, hardcover, $6.95.

152 p. : ill. ; 20 cm. Grades 3-6

292.1 Rating: 4

*Greek Myths* by Diane Namm, part of the Classic
Starts series, retells fifteen of the most well-known and enduring Greek myths for younger readers. Among those included are Pandora’s Box, Daedalus and Icarus, King Midas, and Hercules (called Heracles in the book; “Heracles” is the Greek form from which the Roman “Hercules” is derived).

The retellings are brief and easily readable in one sitting. They are clear, targeting children of approximately third grade and above. The text size and book size are also just right for elementary readers.

A few thought-provoking questions for children to consider after they read the stories are appended to the end of the book, as is a small “Note to Parents and Educators” about the value for children of reading abridgments of adult works.

Pronunciation help for Greek proper names may have been beneficial; and the stories do have the feel of retellings rather than tellings. The illustrations are skillful and appropriate for the content. They will be helpful for children for whom the figures and objects in these stories are very foreign.

Mark L. Ward, CLJ

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Electrical wizard: how Nikola Tesla lit up the world / Elizabeth Rusch, illustrated by Oliver Dominguez.


1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 30 cm. Grades 2-6

621.3 Rating: *5

Born in Serbia, Nikola Tesla grows up with a great curiosity about electricity. When his experiments with alternating current are met with skepticism throughout Europe, he travels to America to enlist the support of Thomas Edison. Committed to the development of direct current, Edison becomes Tesla’s adversary rather than a collaborator. Which scientist will be chosen to light up the Chicago World’s Fair and contribute to many of the technologies used today? Electrical Wizard: How Nikola Tesla Lit Up the World introduces the lesser-known inventor and the enduring impact of his work and ideas.

This fascinating picture book sheds “light” on a much-overlooked visionary who helped brighten the world in the early 20th century. Author Elizabeth Rusch portrays Tesla as creative, determined, and focused, feeling “like a fortune-teller” as he seeks to convince investors to see a future without candles and gas lamps. The writing is alive and action-filled, expressing the drive and enthusiasm of Tesla himself. Rusch explains the science behind “invisible energy”, sometimes referring to electricity as seeming like magic or wizardry. The latter half of the story relates Tesla’s role in channeling the force of Niagara Falls to generate power for New York.

Muted gouache, ink, and acrylic drawings by Oliver Dominguez depict some of Tesla’s projects in scenes that agreeably capture the setting and time period. Endnotes provide additional information about Tesla’s life, work, and rivalry with Edison, along with a selected bibliography.

A strongly worded warning to young readers about experimenting with electricity and an illustrated explanation of AC vs. DC current is
useful to review ahead of reading the story. There is a brief mention of the deliberate electrocution of animals as a scare tactic. Intended for an intermediate audience, *Electrical Wizard* has plenty of interesting material to illuminate high schoolers and above. 

*Nina Ditmar, CLJ*

**I lay my stitches down : poems of American slavery / written by Cynthia Grady ; illustrated by Michele Wood.**

LCCN 2011022481   ISBN 9780802853868, hardcover, $17.00.  
1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 32 cm.   Grades 4-6  
811   Rating: 5

In *I Lay My Stitches Down: Poems of American Slavery*, Cynthia Grady retells the African American slave experience through short poems. Each poem is titled after a specific quilt pattern and thematically centered on an aspect of the slave experience reflecting the words of the title. These experiences range from the daily task that slaves were forced to carry out to their longing for—and sometimes achievement of—freedom. The structure of each poem is also designed to reflect the square shapes used in quilting. Each poem can stand alone in theme and content, yet all have three common qualities that tie them together: a sewing or textile term, a spiritual element, and a musical reference. At the bottom of each poem, a historical note is provided that explains some uncommon custom, term, or way of life referenced in the poem. Each poem is accompanied by a painting that incorporates the quilting pattern into the illustrated image of the slave experience depicted in the poem.

Grady does an excellent job of sensitively portraying the harsh realities of slave life through the heartbreaking beauty of poetry that is simple on the surface but complex and purposeful in structure, content, and theme. She does more than recount the slave experience; she weaves a tale of the spirit of those enslaved. Her use of quilting patterns in the labeling and organization of theme is both unique and brilliant, reflecting the culture as well as the experience of the slaves. The illustrations simply echo the thought and feelings evoked by the poems they accompany, breathing life and color into the words and the experiences recounted. The historical notes accompanying each poem are informative and accurate and add to the reader’s understanding of the poem. Due to the complexity of emotion and depth of content, this collection can be enjoyed by teens as well as adults. Overall, this compilation of poetry is moving and rich in substance. 

*Justina McBride, CLJ*
Middle School Fiction

The sword, the garden, and the king; fairy tale for children of all ages / by Michael Phillips. (Annals of the forest; 1) Yellowood House, an imprint of Sunrise Books, 2013.
238 p. : map ; 21 cm. Grades 5-8
Fic Rating: 5

Michael Phillips, author of several historical fiction series, pens his own “fairy tale for children of all ages” inspired by the tradition of C. S. Lewis (Chronicles of Narnia series) and George MacDonald (late 1800s Scottish author known for his fantasy literature).

In The Sword, the Garden, and the King, fourteen-year-old Matthew Robinson and his siblings arrive for a visit at their grandparents’ house. At night Matthew dreams of animals and airplanes, perhaps influenced by the war stories his grandfather and great-grandfather have told him over the years. When Matthew explores the nearby forest, he hears the animals talk and tell him about the King of the Forest—that’s when his adventure begins!

Two prairie dogs tell Matthew he has a special mission to serve the King. The next day, a crow takes him to meet the King. Since he has never met the King, Matthew doesn’t know that the crow works for an imposter. Matthew is taken in by the smooth lies spoken by the pretend-king, ones that appeal to his desires. He forgets his true mission as he falls under the imposter’s spell. Matthew must face the lies that have taken root within him before he can complete the mission for the true King. Will he be able to complete his mission?

Phillips creates a believable world where animals and humans interact and communicate with one another, where good battles evil in what looks like an English countryside but is a parallel world. The Sword, the Garden, and the King has the feel of the Chronicles of Narnia in its spiritual overtones.

Recommended for public and school libraries, and fantasy lovers, especially Chronicles of Narnia fans.

Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ

Countdown / Deborah Wiles. (The sixties trilogy; 1) Scholastic Press, 2010.
377 p. : ill., maps ; 22 cm. Grades 5-9
Fic Rating: 4

Revolution / Deborah Wiles. (The sixties trilogy; 2) Scholastic Press, 2014.
495 p. : ill., maps ; 22 cm. Grades 5-9
Fic Rating: 4

In Deborah Wiles’s Countdown, eleven-year-old Franny Chapman’s family is very concerned when events in Cuba escalate to a showdown with Russia in 1962. Franny’s normal life of friends, school, and family is upset by world events. Each person in Franny’s life reacts to the crisis differently. Mom and Dad try to protect the children from events while coping with the news. Franny’s college-age sister decides that she needs to take action. Uncle Otts, a former soldier and a current Civil Defense worker, begins to dig a bomb shelter in the middle of the
front yard. But is he really as crazy as he seems? The school calls extra safety drills, and "Duck and cover" becomes a constant refrain. Franny and her friends try to make sense of what is happening. She sums up the mood on p. 21 by saying "We are all going to die."

Revolution focuses on another eleven-year-old girl, Sunny. Franny's sister joins the Mississippi Summer Freedom Project to help the African-American people in Sunny's Mississippi town register to vote. Sunny and her brother Gillette sneak out to swim in the public pool in the middle of the night. This midnight swim marks the start of a chain of events that rock the whole town, along with the "invaders" who start "Freedom Schools" and work with the African-American community.

The publisher calls the Sixties Trilogy "documentary novels." The stories are interspersed with rock song lyrics, posters, pertinent biographies, and photographs from that time period. Revolution opens with 40 pages of such documentary information. Extensive references are cited at the end of each book.

Both books express some anti-war sentiment. Revolution depicts religious hypocrisy as being prevalent in that time and place, although there are also pastors and others who act bravely in accordance with their Christian faith. Sunny and her friend memorize scriptures (although they do not necessarily use them correctly). There are mild depictions of violence.

Carol Baker, CLJ

High School Fiction

Season of wonder / Season of wonder; 1. (Remnants ; 1)
Blink, 2014.
414 p.; 21 cm. Grades 9-12
Fic Rating: 5

Remnants: Season of Wonder opens years after the world has been ravaged by war and disease. Modern conveniences are a luxury, and, tragically, acknowledgement of the Maker is a crime. It is into this world that a special group of children, called "Ailith," are born. The Maker gives the Ailith children a special birthmark as well as gifts that will be used to deliver mankind from the oppression that has overtaken them. Each Ailith has a bodyguard, and they spend their whole life training for the day when the Maker will call them to fulfill their duties. Andriana is Ailith, and Remnants is her story. It is the story of her missions with the other Ailith, her relationship with her bodyguard Ronan whom she loves, and her expanding knowledge of her Maker.

This dystopian fantasy by Lisa T. Bergren is the first in a trilogy about the Ailith fulfilling a prophecy given long ago by the elders. Bergren is a master storyteller who can not only pack the plot with action, but also create well-developed characters. The characters face trials faced by many teens, including forbidden relationships. Andriana and Ronan were told in the beginning of their training that they were never to love each other as more than siblings, but over time, their feelings for each other have...
grown. Throughout the book, they develop their special gifts and learn to trust the Maker and follow his guidance. In addition to that, they learn they must also lean on the Maker to check their feelings for each other, though they do not always remember to do so as the temptation to kiss and express their feelings for each other grows. There is one use of mild language. Though the times of this book are bleak, there is hope that the Maker has not forgotten, has a plan, and is working all things together for good.

Kristina Wolcott, CLJ

**Interrupted : a life beyond words / Rachel Coker.**


247 p.; 21 cm. Grades 9-12

Fic Rating: 5

Alcyone Everly, known as Allie, has been caring for her mother since she was ten, depending on and trusting in no one, just as her mother has taught her. Allie spends her days trying to keep Mama happy and helping her to remember, while drawing and writing about life in the sketchbook given to her by Sam Carroll, Allie’s only friend and the boy who annoys her with his kindness and adoring glances. Shortly after her fourteenth birthday, Allie’s mother dies, and life is changed forever. Allie is sent to live in a strange new place with Miss Beatrice, a woman who wants to take the place of Allie’s mother and give Allie a new last name. As the years pass, Allie refuses to open her heart to Miss Beatrice or the God that Miss Beatrice loves. Instead, Allie finds solace and escape through words, both her own and those of great writers and poets such as Emily Dickinson. However, one summer brings an unexpected visitor who interrupts Allie’s perfectly controlled life. Will Allie ever open her heart to the love surrounding her?

In *Interrupted: A Life Beyond Words*, Rachel Coker weaves a moving tale of a bitter young girl’s transformation into a young woman of grace and love, set amidst the backdrop of the World War II era. The first-person narrative affords an intimate look into the heart and mind of Allie, a complex character that will frustrate, charm, and sadden readers. Miss Beatrice is a unique character that readers may initially misunderstand but grow to love as the plot unfolds, reflecting Allie’s own changing thoughts and feelings towards the woman. Readers will be instantly drawn to Sam Carroll, who is like a steadfast anchor. The plot develops unhurriedly, as character growth moves the story along. The love story is gentle and sweet, and the writing fresh and beautiful. The novel’s underlying theme is that hope and freedom are found in opening one’s heart to love and finding forgiveness. Allie’s story shows the power of God’s work through Jesus Christ to unleash a heart from its prison of bitterness and hate.

Justina McBride, CLJ

**The princess spy / Melanie Dickerson.**

Zondervan, 2014.


293 p.; 22 cm. Grades 9-12 (Adult)

Fic Rating: 5

Award-winning Melanie Dickerson pens her fourth young adult novel set in medieval
Germany, loosely based on the story of The Frog Prince.

In The Princess Spy, Margaretha of Hagenheim Castle is a talkative young woman whose latest suitor—Lord Claybrook—seems enamored of her despite her talkativeness. Could he be her true love?

When an injured man is brought to the castle, Margaretha realizes he is speaking English and that she is the only one who understands him. As he recovers from his injuries and begins working in the stable, Colin confides he is searching for Claybrook, who may not be who he seems to be. Should she believe a foreigner? Should she spy on her suitor when Colin asks her to do so?

Then, while her father is away from the castle, Margaretha overhears Claybrook talking to his men about his plans. Colin and Margaretha flee to reach her relatives in Marienberg. Pursued by enemies, will they reach Marienberg in time to get reinforcements?

As in her earlier books, the faith element is clearly evident yet not preachy. For example, Colin and Margaretha pray for God’s guidance. Dickerson’s tales feature wholesome relationships while still building a strong attraction between the main characters, making this a good choice for teen readers.

Dickerson is a masterful storyteller with a carefully crafted plot, richly-drawn characters, and detailed setting. The reader is easily pulled into the story. All of her books are a delightful reimagining of a familiar tale—this one is her best so far!

Recommended for young adults and adults who are young at heart.

Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ

Angel eyes / Shannon Dittemore. (Angel eyes; 1)
327 p.; 22 cm. Grades 7-11
Fic Rating: 5

Broken wings / Shannon Dittemore. (Angel eyes; 2)
308 p.; 22 cm. Grades 7-11
Fic Rating: 5

Dark halo / Shannon Dittemore. (Angel eyes; 3)
356 p.; 22 cm. Grades 7-11
Fic Rating: 5

In Angel Eyes, eighteen-year-old Brielle Matthews leaves the prestigious boarding school she has been attending for two years and heads home to the small town of Stratus, Oregon, all the while trying to cope with the murder of her best friend Ali. Even at home, she cannot escape the guilt and fear that has gripped her being with an aching chill. Then, she meets Jake, the new kid in town whose unusually warm hands possess a gift beyond Brielle’s understanding, a gift not of this world. When Jake gives her a golden ring that changes shape and seems to know what she needs, Brielle is given a glimpse into the Celestial world, where angels of light and demons of darkness wage...
war. She and Jake seem to be right in the middle of this war—will they be able to escape the corruption of darkness?

In *Broken Wings*, Brielle looks forward to the promise of forever with Jake, a promise sent straight from the Throne Room. However, the unnerving presence of a new face in Stratus and the threat of an old enemy challenge Brielle's new found faith and hope for the future.

*Dark Halo* opens with Brielle alone in the orchid and Jake gone, now in Damien’s evil clutches. The spiritual battle over Stratus is growing, and Brielle’s Celestial sight is becoming a weighty gift. When the Prince of Darkness offers her a means of escape, will Brielle exchange light for darkness?

In the Angel Eyes Trilogy, Shannon Dittemore creates a bridge between the world of the Terrestrial (the earthly) and the world of the Celestial (the Heavenly), using poetic prose and multidimensional characters to create page-turning fiction. Her descriptions are so vivid and lively that the reader will not be left unmoved. In each book, the author reveals just enough of the mystery to hold the reader’s attention and add to the suspense of the plot. Though this trilogy is a work of fiction, it is a good reminder of the spiritual battle that is very real, even if it cannot be seen with earthly eyes. The greatest truth the author seems to be sharing with her readers is explained best in Brielle’s own words: “The Terrestrial is a facade, a place where we can control how we’re viewed, how our friends and neighbors see us. Here, though, in the heavenly realm, nothing can be covered, nothing hidden” (*Angel Eyes*, p. 237). Accompanying this is a lesson of choice—one of choosing spiritual sight rather than blindness and escape. Overall,

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discoveries about herself and her world—and finds out that she still has freedom to make some choices for herself.

Firstborn is well-written although rough in spots. Written in the first person, the reader can feel Tiadone’s desire to be treated as a girl, as well as her frustration in knowing that her desire can never become a reality in her society. The world building is well done, and teenagers might enjoy reading this story about a society that does not value human life and how one girl learns to seek a better way. There are a few moderately graphic scenes depicting injuries and the killing or maiming of animals.

Juanita Nobles, CLJ

Rebels / Williamson, Jill. (Safe lands series ; 3)

Blink, 2014.
384 p.: ill. ; 21 cm. Grades 9-12 Fic Rating: 5

Award-winning author Jill Williamson returns with Rebels, the final book in her dystopian series. Three teen brothers—Omar, Levi, and Mason—decide how they will live in a land that is not their own, one where pleasure is valued more than human life and where many temptations make it difficult to stay true to their faith.

In Rebels, after freeing the women and children from the Safe Lands, Levi and his wife Jemma lead their group underground to join the rebels Levi befriended. The new residents aren’t welcome among the rebels, and tensions escalate, especially since Giddah (a Safe Lander) is among Levi’s group. But there are others still to rescue. During the next rescue attempt, Levi is betrayed, and Jemma is captured.

Meanwhile, Omar and Mason are imprisoned and sentenced to immediate liberation. But what is “liberation”? A firing squad—or something more sinister? Can they be saved from their fate? Who are the Ancients? What happens when the rebels join forces to overthrow the Safe Lands Guild?

Williamson creates a plausible futuristic world where believers are endangered, and most people live as if personal pleasure is the only thing of value. Unfortunately, they are seeing the ramifications of that choice. At the heart of this book is the theme of forgiveness, both giving and receiving it, and the difficulty of accepting its reality in one’s life. There are plenty of plot twists in this final book, even though the storylines are completed.

Fans of teen dystopian fiction should like this series. Discussion questions make this a good selection for teen book clubs.

Recommended for teen collections in school and public libraries.

Carol R. Gehringer, worthy2read.wordpress.com

High School Nonfiction

Concordia's complete Bible handbook, second edition / .

Concordia, 2013.
Concordia’s Complete Bible Handbook (Second Edition) provides an overview of the Bible: its content, authorship, organization, historical context, and application. Illustrations and photographs, maps, charts, and devotional passages combine with informational text to present both the Old and New Testaments as well as the 400 years in between. The addition of a 190-page dictionary distinguishes this second edition from the first.

This is a very reader-friendly book for students and adults interested in learning about the Bible and a myriad of related topics. Visually engaging and well-organized into ten parts, Concordia’s Complete Bible Handbook is a versatile tool, equally useful as a source of reference for scattered perusal or for cover-to-cover immersion. Editor Edward A. Engelbrecht delivers a resource for readers just getting acquainted with the Bible as well as knowledgeable readers seeking to learn more, reconnect, or use as a study outline. In addition to a synopsis of each book of the Bible, there are many fascinating sidebars on such topics as the history of printing, the disease of leprosy, and marriage in Bible times.

The writing is clear and compelling, sometimes addressing the reader directly. An array of photos, drawings, and bright graphics combine to illustrate the history, geography, and genealogy of biblical times.

 Portions of the handbook are attributed to Lutheran and other sources, and most Scripture is quoted from the English Standard Version. The expansive dictionary offers pronunciation help and references each word’s place both in Scripture and in the handbook.

Nina Ditmar, CLJ

Zondervan handbook to the Bible, 4th edition / [edited by David and Pat Alexander].

Zondervan, 2011.
816 pl: ill. (some col.), col. maps; 22 cm. Grades 4-12
(Adult)
220.61 Rating: 5

Zondervan Handbook to the Bible is an illustrated guide to each book of the Old and New Testaments combined with extensive supplemental and reference material. Edited by David and Pat Alexander, this fourth edition contains articles from over 70 contributors and a “Rapid Factfinder” indexed both to Scripture and to this handbook.

Captivating and comprehensive, this publication is a fantastic resource, smartly arranged into four major sections. “Introducing the Bible” offers a historical overview of the Bible including its setting, authorship, and application. “The Old Testament” and “The New Testament” present verse-by-verse summaries alongside quotes from Scripture, commentary, and sidebar articles. The 33-page “Rapid Factfinder” identifies and references key figures and events from Aaron to Zorah.

The entire Zondervan Handbook to the Bible is stunningly illustrated with photographs, charts, timelines, maps, colorful graphics, and drawings. Some of the photos are full or double page, enhancing the visual appeal and further encouraging the reader’s connection to the
This beautiful book has a wide reach, offering readers of all ages the opportunity to learn about the whole Bible, re-read favorite stories, explore Scripture, consider in-depth topics, or even simply enjoy the diverse artwork. With its engaging format, easy readability, and invaluable content, *Zondervan Handbook to the Bible* would be a wonderful gift for the entire family, sure to find longevity on the bookshelf, nightstand, or coffee table.

*Nina Ditmar, CLJ*
Adult Fiction

**In the field of grace / Tessa Afshar.**
290 p. ; 22 cm. Adult (HS) Fic Rating: 4

*In the Field of Grace* is a fictionalized account of the biblical story of Ruth, a Moabite woman who is in the lineage of Jesus Christ. Because of a famine in Israel, Elimelech and Naomi and their family emigrate to Moab, where their sons marry local women, Ruth and Orpah. Eventually Elimelech and his sons die, and Naomi decides to return to Israel. Orpah remains in Moab, but Ruth chooses to relocate with Naomi.

The plot unfolds slowly, but picks up the pace as the characters are developed. Ruth and Naomi’s relationship has realistic depth as they grow closer through their shared grief. Themes of redemption and God’s provision are expressed through the character of Boaz, a distant relative of Naomi who allows Ruth to glean extra crops from his fields. Readers are immersed in the era through effective description of the settings and explanations of customs and social mores that are woven throughout the story.

Author Tessa Afshar takes some literary licenses with the story which are explained in the Author’s Notes at the back of the book. She also includes information about her research and sources. Ms. Afshar strongly encourages readers to read the original story of Ruth in the Bible. Teens may also enjoy *In the Field of Grace.*

*Linda Matchett, CLJ*

**A promise to protect : a novel / Patricia Bradley. (Logan Point; 2)**
Revell, 2014.
331 p. ; 22 cm. Adult Fic Rating: 4

Leigh Somerall returns to Logan Point after a ten-year absence, and only because she has to. As a newly minted doctor, she is working off her student loan through a National Health Service contract with the local hospital. She has high hopes that she can keep a secret from her past buried and avoid former boyfriend Ben Logan during her one-year stay.

Ben Logan gives up his dream of joining the Air Marshals to take over as Logan Point’s acting sheriff when his father is shot on the job. The last person Ben expects to hear from is former girlfriend Leigh Somerall. She contacts him with a request to protect her brother, Tony. But it’s not too long before Ben must protect Leigh from the people who are after Tony. When Leigh refuses to believe she’s in danger, Ben has his hands full convincing her to allow him to act as her bodyguard.

*A Promise to Protect* grabs readers immediately as they are drawn into the intrigue of this clean, well-written mystery. Dialogue is realistic, and the characters are highly believable despite their foibles. Themes of faith, love, and redemption are effectively woven throughout. Teens may also appreciate Patricia Bradley’s latest whodunit.

*Linda Matchett, CLJ*
A feast for thieves / Marcus Brotherton. (A Rowdy Slater novel)  
River North, 2014.  
287 p. ; 22 cm. Adult  
Fic Rating: 5

Sergeant Rowdy Slater has a reputation as the most incorrigible paratrooper in Dog Company during WWII. True to character, after the war he robs a bank in Cut Eye, TX with fellow soldier, Crazy Ake. Circumstances force them apart, and Rowdy vows to turn his life around. He returns the money and owns up to the crime. Suspicious of the genuineness of Rowdy’s confession, the sheriff gives him an ultimatum: serve one year as the town minister or go to jail. Rowdy settles in at the community church, but it’s not long before things take a turn for the worse when Crazy Ake appears and demands his share of the cash.

Author Marcus Brotherton tells a story of second chances to which readers can relate. Rowdy’s transformation from a cavalier roughneck with no interest in God to a sincere, down-to-earth pastor impacts his tiny congregation in ways he never imagines.

Written in first person, Feast of Thieves reads as part adventure story and part memoir, and the unusual premise of the book makes for an entertaining story. The Texas dialect and colloquialisms may be occasionally difficult to follow, and the dialogue and descriptions reflect the era. Indicative of the topic, there are two scenes that include violence. The novel may be enjoyed by teens as well, but may be best read with discussion in mind.

Daughter of light / Morgan L. Busse.  
(Follower of the Word; 1)  
464 p. : map ; 22 cm. Adult  
Fic Rating: 4

Morgan Busse enters the speculative fiction world with a strong first novel (Daughter of Light) that speaks of the hope evident even in the darkness. Its sequel–Son of Truth–is equally good and speaks of forgiveness even when one has done evil to others.

In Daughter of Light, Rowen Mar notices a strange white mark on her hand. It allows her to see the “darkness that lies within the heart” when she touches a person. Falsely accused of being a witch, she is exiled from her village. Rowen accepts an invitation to go to the White City to train as Lady Astrea’s bodyguard. While there, Rowen discovers she is an “Eldaran,” or Daughter of Light. Rowen can heal others, though at a cost to her. Her gift is exposed when she acts to save Lore, her captain, and she comes to play a crucial role when the White City is attacked.

Meanwhile, Caleb Tala commits a murder and has nightly visions of a woman with a glowing hand. He has a life-changing encounter with the Word.

In Son of Truth, Rowen flees to Avonai with Lady Astrea. A messenger speaks of the reappearance of the Shadonae (evil shadow beings). Caleb is
called to join forces with Rowen, but first he must help Lore rescue her from capture. Together they will try to overcome the Shadonae.

Christians will appreciate the Christian symbolism lightly woven within the story, while others will enjoy it as a good epic fantasy series. The narration is descriptive, the romance light, and the faith elements evident but not overwhelming. The excellence of Busse’s plot, character development, and world-building is evident in the books’ nominations for several awards.

_Daughter of Light_ was a finalist for the 2013 Grace Awards, the Christy Awards, and the Carol Awards. _Son of Truth_ is a finalist for the 2014 Clive Staples Award. A third book—_Heir of Hope_—is scheduled for publication by Enclave (formerly Marcher Lord Press) in Spring 2015. Recommended for adult collections.

_Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ_

**Deceived : a novel / Irene Hannon.**  
*(Private justice ; 3)*  
Revell, 2014.  
408 p.; 22 cm. Adult  
Fic Rating: 5

Award-winning Irene Hannon presents another book in her contemporary romantic suspense series—_Deceived_, where a private investigator helps a woman unravel the circumstances behind her husband and son’s boating accident.

In _Deceived_, the body of Kate Marshall’s son was never recovered from a boating accident four years earlier. She rebuilt her life and moved to another city. When Kate encounters a boy who looks like her son, her world is turned upside down, but no one believes her. Kate hires Connor Sullivan to help her find out if the boy is her son. As he investigates, it becomes clear the “accident” hides a secret someone doesn’t want revealed, putting Kate in danger. Who was behind the accident? Is her son really alive?

The faith elements are evident but subtle, incorporated into the story. Violence is appropriate and not graphic. Hannon is an expert at presenting believable characters, unexpected twists, an intriguing plot, and just enough romance to make things interesting. Just when the reader thinks the story is done, there is another plot twist to keep the reader engaged until the end.

Highly recommended for all high school and public libraries; this title will appeal to fans of Dee Henderson and DiAnn Mills.

_Carol R. Gehringer, worthy2read.wordpress.com_

**Undetected / Dee Henderson.**  
Bethany House, 2014.  
476 p.; 23 cm. Adult  
Fic Rating: 4

**Unspoken / Dee Henderson.**  
Bethany House, 2013.  
441 p.; 23 cm. Adult  
Fic Rating: 4

Prolific author Dee Henderson kicks off a new contemporary romantic suspense series
featuring the Bishop brothers, strong heroes who accept the challenge of befriending unique women.

In *Unspoken*, Charlotte Graham’s horrific past catches up with her as she deals with a family legacy. Years earlier, she was kidnapped and held prisoner for four long years. Since her rescue, she has rebuilt her life, found a profession she loves, changed her identity—and, most importantly, she has never told anyone about those years of captivity.

Now a reporter is writing a book about her kidnapping. She has to either break her silence or pray the reporter doesn’t uncover the truth. She wants to trust Bryce Bishop, who is helping her with her grandfather’s estate, but revealing the truth will put her loved ones in danger. The police thought the case was solved when her abductors were caught, but they were wrong.

In *Undetected*, Gina Gray—a dedicated ocean science researcher—meets Mark Bishop, naval commander of a ballistic missile submarine. Widowed, Mark wants someone to come home to after patrol, and he has his eye on Gina, but Gina is so engrossed in her work that she might not see it.

When Gina needs Mark’s assistance in her work, they begin a relationship that is as complicated as Gina’s research. Gina’s research could affect Mark’s deployment to the frontline of an oceanic skirmish. Could Gina’s work help Mark avoid being a casualty? Will they be able to avert an international crisis?

Henderson is an excellent storyteller, weaving plot twists and character development. Violence in the story is appropriate but not graphic, and the faith element is light and not overpowering.

Recommended for adult collections in public libraries. These titles will appeal to fans of Irene Hannon, DiAnn Mills, and Lynette Eason.

*Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ*

**The heiress of Winterwood / Sarah E. Ladd. (Whispers on the moors ; 1)**

314 p.; 22 cm. Adult
Fic Rating: 5

**The headmistress of Rosemere / Sarah E. Ladd. (Whispers on the moors ; 2)**

312 p.; 22 cm. Adult
Fic Rating: 5

**A lady at Willowgrove Hall / Sarah E. Ladd. (Whispers on the moors ; 3)**

344 p.; 22 cm. Adult
Fic Rating: 5

Sarah Ladd debuts a Regency series centering on themes of faithfulness, forgiveness, and family secrets in the early 1800s.

*The Heiress of Winterwood* tells of an heiress who promises to raise her dying friend’s baby despite others’ disapproval. Amelia Barrett defies her family, even to the point of proposing a marriage of convenience when her fiancé refuses to allow her to keep the baby when they marry. Captain Graham Sterling—baby Lucy’s father—is away for months at a time. He knows he cannot take care of his child, but Amelia’s
When Lucy is kidnapped, he works to rescue her and make plans for Lucy’s future. Together Amelia and Graham face their growing attraction, as well as trying to find the person behind the kidnapping. Will their faith enable them to face the future together?

In *The Headmistress of Rosemere*, Patience Creighton keeps the Rosemere School for Young Ladies going after her father’s death, but their landlord William Sterling (brother of Captain Sterling from the first book in the series) is facing financial trouble. After Patience cares for his wounds following an assault by his creditors’ thugs, William believes that sacrificing Rosemere might be his only option, but it would cost him a relationship with Patience.

William makes a deal with unscrupulous men, uncovers a secret from his past, and watches a new headmaster—Patience’s former suitor—try to woo her. Will he be able to pay off his creditors? Will William’s past keep Patience and William apart?

In *A Lady at Wintergrove Hall*, Cecily Faire and Nathaniel Stanton have secrets from their past that affect their future. Cecily made an unwise choice when she was sixteen, causing her father to disown her. He left her at Rosemere School where she eventually becomes a teacher. The headmistress recommends her as Lady Trent’s companion, but Cecily is unaware that Lady Trent’s nephew could reveal her past, costing her position at Willowgrove Hall.

Meanwhile Nathaniel, the steward at Willowgrove, follows in the footsteps of his father, the previous steward. He guards a family secret that ties him to Lady Trent and that, if revealed, could jeopardize his sisters’ future. Can Nathaniel and Cecily face the truth and be free from the past?

Recommended for adult collections in public libraries. Ladd is a promising new author in Regency fiction; the series will appeal to fans of Julie Klassen and Jane Austen. Each book includes discussion questions for reading groups.

*Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ*

**Flight of the earls / Michael K. Reynolds. (Heirs of Ireland; 1)**

423 p.; 22 cm. Adult (Grades 10-12)
Fic Rating: 5

**In golden splendor / Michael K. Reynolds. (Heirs of Ireland; 2)**

xii, 433 p.; 22 cm. Adult (Grades 10-12)
Fic Rating: 5

**Songs of the Shenandoah / Michael K. Reynolds. (Heirs of Ireland; 3)**

xv, 431 p.; 22 cm. Adult (Grades 10-12)
Fic Rating: 5

*Flight of the Earls* introduces the Hanley family, reeling from the deaths of a daughter and a son and further devastated by the potato famine. Liam Hanley sends his daughter, Clare, and his son, Seamus, off to America to get jobs that would enable them to send money home to help
the rest of the family. America presents formidable obstacles, new love, and shocking surprises. When Clare uncovers the schemes of a man she once loved and respected, she knows she must return home. Her homeland and family are in ruins, and only love—of God and man—can bring her through overwhelming distress.

In Golden Splendor follows Seamus Hanley as he leaves his mountain hideaway and travels to California in search of the beautiful woman in a photograph he found. In the course of his travels, Seamus meets new friends and learns the value of selfless love. Will he find Ashlyn, the woman in the picture? Will he be reunited with his younger brother, Davin, whose longing for adventure and to find Seamus lead him from New York to California? Through the challenges and victories Seamus experiences in the Golden State, he begins to understand the extent of God’s love and plan for him.

Songs of the Shenandoah continues the Hanleys’ American experience. Seamus and Davin return to New York for the first time since leaving. Clare and her husband continue to run the New York Daily where they highlight the plight of slaves and the evils of slavery, and find themselves under financial strain for doing so. Davin meets Muriel, a medical student, and in his attraction never guesses her secret. As the Civil War adds tension and pitches brother against brother, it also reunites them in unexpected ways as they learn to listen for the songs of the Shenandoah.

Michael K. Reynolds’ vivid descriptions transport the reader to the life of an Irish immigrant in America from 1846-1867. Rich detail provides the backdrop for this historical series. The challenges faced by the characters mirror challenges faced by humanity. The characters’ growth through trials encourages modern readers to confront difficult times with bravery and courage, knowing that much can be accomplished through faith in God and a willingness to love and forgive others. The reader becomes immersed in the lives of the Hanley family as the plot of each book unfolds carefully. The theme running throughout the series emphasizes importance of listening, especially to the Creator of the songs of the Shenandoah. “There is only one way to hear these songs. These songs of the Shenandoah. It’s through trust. Through faith. When you do, you know only one voice matters.” (Songs of the Shenandoah, p. 100)

Kristina Wolcott, CLJ

The daughter of Highland Hall / Carrie Turansky. (Edwardian brides; 2)
326 p.; 21 cm. Adult
Fic  Rating: 4

Award-winning author Carrie Turansky tells the story of a beautiful, strong-willed woman facing her London season in 1912.

Katherine Ramsey, cousin to Sir William Ramsey, needs to find a husband to secure her future, now that her family estate—Highland Hall—is passing into Sir William’s hands. Her overbearing aunt acts as her guide to the social season. Courted by Edward Wellington, a prominent and wealthy man, Katherine thinks a predictable but pleasant future awaits her. But as the season wears on, her family faces a scandal that may derail Katherine’s future. To
keep a low profile, she volunteers with the poor. As Katherine works with medical student Jonathan Foster in London’s East End, their friendship deepens and her faith in God grows. When the scandal is finally resolved, Katherine must decide whether to follow her heart or tradition.

Turansky paints a story of Edwardian England where a young woman’s only option is to live under her father’s care or her husband’s care, requiring her to make an excellent match. Turansky’s books are filled with likeable characters and a rich narrative. A reader’s guide with discussion questions is included.

Recommended for public collections and school libraries. It will appeal especially to fans of the PBS television series, Downton Abbey, especially in the various characters in Turansky’s books. Fans of her books will look forward to The Refuge of Highland Hall, coming in October 2015.

Carol R. Gehringer, Worthy2Read.wordpress.com

Full steam ahead / Karen Witemeyer.
Bethany House, 2014.
348 p.; 22 cm. Adult
Fic Rating: 4

Award-winning author Karen Witemeyer combines diligent research with superior storytelling in her latest historical fiction featuring a scientist and a wealthy debutante during the steamboat era.

In Full Steam Ahead, Nicole Renard returns home to find her father quite ill. Her father is working himself to death, and wants a husband for Nicole to whom he can pass the reins of the family business. Nicole has her own plans to find a husband—by using the secret family treasure as her dowry. Her father’s rivals know he is ill and try to steal the treasure—the Lafitte Dagger—putting her family in danger.

Darius Thornton is haunted by his failure to save a little girl when a ship’s boiler exploded. He becomes obsessive in his experiments with steamboat engines, trying to prevent future boiler disasters. Nicole shows up on his doorstep after she flees from Texas and takes up employment as Darius’ secretary. Together they face exploding experiments, a homeless boy, mutual attraction, and ruthless rivals in search of the infamous dagger.

Will Nicole set aside her heart’s desires to give her father a suitable heir for Renard Shipping? Will Darius overcome his guilt from not saving the little girl? Will he be reunited with his family from whom he is estranged? Will the Lafitte Dagger fall into another family’s possession? Will Nicole’s dying father live to see his daughter marry?

Faith elements are clearly evident, and the historical elements are well-researched. Main characters see their relationship with God grow as they experience trials and challenges, yet the tone is not preachy. Witemeyer manages to use the right combination to produce a well-written, enjoyable book.

Recommended for public and church libraries, especially for fans of Julie Lessman and Deeanne Gist.

Carol R. Gehringer, CLJ
Adult Nonfiction

Tables in the wilderness : a memoir of God found, lost, and found again / Preston Yancey.
Zondervan, 2014.
140 p. ; 22 cm. College (Adult)
277.3  Rating: 4

Tables in the Wilderness: A Memoir of God Found, Lost, and Found Again is a record of Preston Yancey's personal journey through a crisis in faith while he is an undergraduate student at Baylor University in Texas. He questions his Southern Baptist upbringing while at the same time trying to regain his intimate relationship with God; he can no longer hear God's voice like he could when he was younger.

Preston Yancey has written the memoir in a stream of consciousness style. This enables readers to experience firsthand the moments of worry, doubt, indecision, and frustration Preston goes through as he tries to figure out which denomination is the right one for him and why God is silent. Preston’s journey leads him to gaining a better understanding of Christian faith and into a richer and deeper relationship with God.

This memoir will appeal to college students who believe in God, but sometimes feel abandoned by Him. They will find the memoir a guiding light as they seek to grow in their Christian faith. Because literature is an integral part of Preston’s journey, he includes a Suggested

Reading List of influential books. The included Reading Guide is useful for individual and group study.

Dianne Woodman, CLJ
CORE COLLECTION
FOR CHRISTIAN READERS

Being developed by librarians:
Donna W. Bowling: Fiction
Nancy L. Hesch: Nonfiction

Goal: to develop a list of highly recommended books for Christian readers, Christian school libraries, and church libraries.
**Primary Fiction**

* 

**E**

Becker, Aaron

*Journey / Aaron Becker.*

1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 25 x 28 cm. Grades PS-2.
E Rating: 5
Stories without words.
Fantasy.

**E**

Dominguez, Angela N.

*Maria had a little llama / Angela Dominguez = Maria tenia una llamita / Angela Dominguez.*

1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 cm. Toddler-Grade 1.
E Rating: 5
Spanish language materials--Bilingual.
Llamas as pets--Fiction.

**E**

Lunde, Stein Erik

*My father's arms are a boat / Stein Erik Lunde ; [illustrated by] Oyvind Torseter ; translated from the Norwegian by Kari Dickson.*

LCCN 2012022767. ISBN 9781592701247, hardcover, $15.95.
1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 25 x 28 cm. Grades PS-2.
E Rating: 5
Death--Fiction.
Fathers and sons--Fiction.

**Primary Nonfiction**

598.7

**Roth, Susan L**

*Parrots over Puerto Rico / by Susan L. Roth and Cindy Trumbore ; collages by Susan L. Roth. (Parrots)*

LCCN 2012048195. ISBN 9781620140048, hardcover, $19.95.
1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 24 x 27 cm. Grades PS-3.
598.7 Rating: 5
Puerto Rican parrot--Juvenile literature.
Parrots.

**B**

Bryant, Jennifer

*A splash of red : the life and art of Horace Pippin / written by Jen Bryant ; illustrated by Melissa Sweet.*

1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 cm. Grades K-3.
B Rating: 5
Pippin, Horace--1888-1946--Juvenile literature.
African American painters--Biography.
CHILDREN’S BOOKS

*  

B

Nelson, Kadir

Nelson Mandela / words and paintings by Kadir Nelson.

LCCN 2012025492. ISBN 9780061783760, library binding, $18.89.
1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 32 cm. Grades 2-6.
B Rating: *5
Presidents--South Africa--Biography--Juvenile literature.

Intermediate Fiction

Fic

DiCamillo, Kate

Flora & Ulysses : the illuminated adventures / Kate DiCamillo ; illustrated by K.G. Campbell.

231 p. : ill. ; 22 cm. Grades 3-6.
Fic Rating: 5
Superheroes
Fantasy fiction.

Fic

Fitzgerald, John Dennis

The great brain / by John D. Fitzgerald ; illustrated by Mercer Mayer. (Great brain)

New York : Dial Books for Young Readers, 0.

175 p. : ill. ; 22 cm. Grades 3-7.
Fic Humorous stories.
Imagination--Juvenile fiction.

Fic

Henkes, Kevin

The year of Billy Miller / Kevin Henkes.

229 p. ; 22 cm. Grades 3-6.
Fic Rating: 5
Family life--Fiction.
Schools--Fiction.

Fic

Lofting, Hugh

The story of Doctor Dolittle / told by Hugh Lofting ; illustrated by Michael Hague ; foreword by Patricia C. McKissack and Fredrick L. McKissack ; afterword by Peter Glassman. (Books of wondeer)

New York : William Morrow, 0.
xiv, 159 p. : ill. (some col.) ; 24 cm. Grades 4-7.
Fic Fantasy.
Animals--Fiction.

Fic

Robinson, Barbara

The best Christmas pageant ever / Barbara Robinson ; pictures by Judith Gwyn Brown.

LCCN 72076501. ISBN 9780060250430, hardcover,
$16.99.
80 p. : ill. ; 21 cm. Grades 4-6.
Fic Behavior--Fiction.
Brothers and sisters--Fiction.

Fic
St. John, Patricia Mary
Rainbow garden / Patricia M. St. John; revised by Mary Mills; illustrated by Gary Rees.
163 p. : ill. ; 20 cm. Grades 4-6.
Fic Gardens--Fiction.
Family life--Wales--Fiction.

Fic
Travers, P. L.
Mary Poppins / P.L. Travers; illustrated by Mary Shepard.
209 p. : ill. ; 20 cm. Grades 4-6.
Fic Fantasy.

Intermediate Nonfiction

385
Floca, Brian
Locomotive / Brian Floca.
LCCN 2012042295. ISBN 9781416994152, hardcover,

$17.99.
1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 31 cm. Grades K-5.
385 Rating: 5
Railroads--United States--History--19th century--Juvenile literature.
Locomotives--United States--History--19th century--Juvenile literature.

398.21
Lang, Andrew
New York : Dover Publications, 0.
LCCN 65025707. ISBN 9780486214375, paperback, $10.95.
398.21 Fairy tales.

398.21
Lang, Andrew
The green fairy book / edited by Andrew Lang; with numerous illustrations by H.J. Ford.
New York : Dover Publications, 0.
398.21 Fairy tales.

398.21
Lang, Andrew
The red fairy book / edited by Andrew Lang; with numerous ill. by H.J. Ford and Lancelot Speed.
New York : Dover Publications, 0.
LCCN 66024134. ISBN 9780486216737, paperback, $12.95.
398.21 Fairy tales.

398.21

Lang, Andrew

The yellow fairy book / edited by Andrew Lang ; with numerous illustrations by H.J. Ford.

New York : Dover Publications, 0.
LCCN 66024132. ISBN 9780486216744, paperback, $12.95.
398.21 Fairy tales.

*

B

Rosenstock, Barb

The streak : how Joe DiMaggio became America's hero / Barb Rosenstock.

Honesdale, PA : Calkins Creek, 2014.
LCCN 2013947717. ISBN 9781590789926, hardcover, $16.95.
1 v. (unpaged) : col. ill. ; 29 x 25 cm. Grades 2-5.
B Rating: *5
Baseball.
Middle School Fiction

Fic
Haskell, Merrie
Handbook for dragon slayers / Merrie Haskell.
324 p. ; 22 cm. Grades 5-8.
Fic Rating: 5
Books and reading--Fiction.
Dragons--Fiction.

Fic
Juster, Norton
The phantom tollbooth / Norton Juster ; illustrated by Jules Feiffer.
LCCN . ISBN 9780394815008, hardcover, $19.95.
255 p. : ill. ; 24 cm. Grades 5-8.
Fic Space and time--Fiction.
Fantasy.

Fic
MacDonald, George
The princess and Curdie / George MacDonald ; illustrated by Helen Stratton. (Puffin classics)
256 p. : ill. ; 20 cm. Grades 5-8.
Fic Fairy tales.

Fic
Lawson, Robert
Ben and me : a new and astonishing life of Benjamin Franklin as written by his good mouse Amos / lately discovered, edited & illustrated by Robert Lawson.
Boston : Little Brown, 0.
xiii, 125 p. : ill. ; 20 cm. Grades 5-8.
Fic Rating: *5

Franklin, Benjamin--1706-1790--Fiction.
Mice--Fiction.

Fic
MacDonald, George
The princess and the goblin / by George MacDonald ; introduction by Jeanne DuPrau ; illustrated by Arthur Hughes. (Looking Glass Library)
259 p. : ill. ; 19 cm. Grades 5-8.
Fic Fairy tales.

Fic
Nixon, Joan Lowery
A family apart / Joan Lowery Nixon. (Orphan train quartet)
162 p. ; 18 cm. Grades 4-8.
Fic Brothers and sisters--Juvenile fiction.
Foster home care--Juvenile fiction.
Fic

Pearce, Philippa

Tom's midnight garden / A. Philippa Pearce ; illustrated by Susan Einzig.

229 p. : ill. ; 22 cm. Grades 4-7.
Fic Fantasy.
Time travel--Juvenile fiction.

Fic

Vawter, Vince

Paperboy / Vince Vawter.

224 p. ; 22 cm. Grades 6-8.
Fic Rating: 5
Stuttering--Fiction.
Self-esteem--Fiction.

Middle School Nonfiction

940.53

Sandler, Martin W.

Imprisoned : the betrayal of Japanese Americans during World War II / by Martin W. Sandler.

940.53 Rating: 5
Japanese Americans--Evacuation and relocation, 1942-1945--Juvenile literature
World War, 193901945--Japanese Americans--Juvenile literature.

*
High School Fiction

Fic
Engle, Margarita
The lightning dreamer : Cuba's greatest abolitionist / Margarita Engle.
182 p. ; 21 cm. Grades 7-12.
Fic Rating: *5
Gomez de Avellaneda y Arteaga, Gertrudis--1814-1873--Fiction.
Abolitionists--Fiction.

Fic
Gardner, Sally
Maggot moon / Sally Gardner ; [illustrations by Julian Crouch].
279 p. : ill. ; 21 cm. Grades 9-12.
Fic Rating: 5
Friendship--Fiction.
Courage--Fiction.

Fic
Mains, David R.
Tales of the kingdom / David and Karen Mains ; interior illustrations by Linda Wells.
LCCN 99058949. ISBN 9780781432887, paperback, OP; buy used.
110 p. : ill. ; 22 cm. Grades 9-12.
Fic Rating: 

Fantasy.

Fic
Myers, Walter Dean
Darius & Twig / Walter Dean Myers.
201 p. ; 19 cm. Grades 9-12.
Fic Rating: 5
Dominican Americans--Fiction.
Friendship--Fiction.

Fic
Sax, Aline
The war within these walls / written by Aline Sax ; illustrated by Caryl Strzelecki ; translated by Laura Watkinson.
LCCN 2013005663. ISBN 9780802854285, hardcover, $17.00.
175 p. : ill. ; 23 cm. Grades 9-12.
Fic Rating: 5
Jews--Poland--Fiction.
Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)--Poland--Fiction.

High School Nonfiction

740
Kidd, Chip
Go : a Kidd's guide to graphic design / Chip Kidd.
LCCN 2013032394. ISBN 9780761172192, hardcover,
Adult Fiction

Fic

Breslin, Kate

For such a time / Kate Breslin.

430 p.; 22 cm. Adult.
Fic Rating: 5
World War, 1939-1945--Jewish resistance--Fiction.
Jewish girls--Fiction.

*

Fic

Kingsbury, Karen

(Angels walking; 1)

360 p.; 22 cm. Adult.
Fic Rating: *5
Miracles--Fiction.
Alzheimer's disease--Patients--Fiction.

Fic

Sundin, Sarah

In perfect time : a novel / Sarah Sundin. (Wings of the nightingale; 3)

410 p.; 22 cm. Adult.
Fic Rating: 5
United States--Army Nurse Corps--Fiction.
World War, 1939-1945--Fiction
**Review Index**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afshar, Tessa</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Angel eyes</em></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Annals of the forest</em> 1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The answers book for kids</em> 20</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The answers book for kids</em> 22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The answers book for kids</em> 22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The answers book for kids</em> 22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The answers book for kids</em> 22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The answers book for kids</em> 22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnett, Mac</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bergren, Lisa Tawn</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradley, Patricia</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Broken wings</em></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Brotherton, Marcus</em></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Busse, Morgan L.</em></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Camcam, Princesse</em></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Classic starts series</em></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coker, Rachel</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Concordia's complete Bible handbook, second edition</em></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Countdown</em></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Dark halo</em></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The daughter of Highland Hall</em></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Daughter of light</em></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis, Kathryn</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Deceived</em> : a novel*</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dickerson, Melanie</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dittemore, Shannon</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwardian brides; 2</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Electrical wizard : how Nikola Tesla lit up the world</em></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Fall leaves</em></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>A feast for thieves</em></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Firstborn</em></td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Flight of the earls</em></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Follower of the Word</em> 2</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Fox's garden</em></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Full steam ahead</em></td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Get to know series</em></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>A good home for Max</em></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grady, Cynthia</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Greek myths</em></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Greenwood, Mark</em></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grover, Lorie Ann</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grün, Anselm</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ham, Ken</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannon, Irene</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The headmistress of Rosemere</em></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The heireness of Winterwood</em></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Heirs of Ireland</em></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henderson, Dee</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland, Loretta</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I lay my stitches down : poems of American slavery</em></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I survived hurricane Katrina, 2005</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I survived series</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I survived the attacks of September 11, 2001</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I survived the Battle of Gettysburg, 1863</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I survived the bombing of Pearl Harbor, 1941</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I survived the destruction of Pompeii, AD 79</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I survived the Japanese tsunami, 2011</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I survived the Nazi invasion, 1944</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I survived the San Francisco Earthquake, 1906</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I survived the shark attacks of 1916</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I survived the sinking of the Titanic, 1912</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>In golden splendor</em></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>In the field of grace</em></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Interrupted : a life beyond words</em></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesus</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingsbury, Karen</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladd, Sarah E.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>A lady at Willowgrove Hall</em></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logan Point; 2</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Ferris and his wheel</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nann, Diane</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phillips, Michael R.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The princess spy</em></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private justice ; 3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>A promise to protect</em> : a novel*</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebels</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remnants : 1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolution</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reynolds, Michael K.</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>A Rowdy Slater novel</em></td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rusch, Elizabeth</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe lands series ; 3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanders, Nancy I.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Season of wonder</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The sixties trilogy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son of truth</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songs of the Shenandoah</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Stories without words</em></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The sword, the garden, and the king ; fairy tale for children of all ages</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tables in the wilderness : a memoir of God found, lost, and found again</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarshis, Lauren</td>
<td>8, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terada, Junzo</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mayflower</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turansky, Carrie</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undetected</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Unspoken</em></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whatever you grow up to be</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whispers on the moors</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiles, Deborah</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williamson, Jill ?</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witemeyer, Karen</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Collection Index</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angels walking : a novel</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becker, Aaron</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben and me : a new and astonishing life of Benjamin Franklin as written by his good mouse Amos</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The best Christmas pageant ever</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The blue fairy book</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books of wonder</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breslin, Kate</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bryant, Jennifer</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darius &amp; Twig</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DiCamillo, Kate</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominguez, Angela N.</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engle, Margarita</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A family apart</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitzgerald, John Dennis</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floca, Brian</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flora &amp; Ulysses : the illuminated adventures</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For such a time</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardner, Sally</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go : a Kidd's guide to graphic design</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great brain</td>
<td>33</td>
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