

Kindergarten

A BABY ELEPHANT IN THE WILD. 2014. Caitlin O'Connell. Photographs by Caitlin O'Connell and Timothy Rodwell. HMH Books for Young Readers. 40 pp. ISBN-10: 0544149440.

Engaging photographs support the interesting descriptions of a baby elephant in Namibia. Standard 3.

HAVE YOU HEARD THE NESTING BIRD? 2014. Rita Gray. Illustrated by Kenard Pak. HMH Books for Young Readers. 32 pp. ISBN-10: 054410580X. Bird songs woven into the repetitive text makes this a perfect read-aloud for young children. Standard 3.

First Grade

ABOUT HABITATS: FORESTS. 2014. Cathryn Sill. Illustrated by John Sill. Peachtree Publishers. 48 pp. ISBN-10: 1561457345. A variety of forests are portrayed with full-page illustrations and limited, precise text. Standard 3.

FEATHERS: NOT JUST FOR FLYING. 2014. Melissa Stewart. Illustrated by Sarah S. Brannen. Charlesbridge. 32 pp. ISBN-10: 1580894305. Watercolor illustrations support the simple yet informative text describing the surprising functions of birds' feathers. Standard 3.

Second Grade

MYSTERIOUS PATTERNS. 2014. Sarah C. Campbell. Photographs by Richard C. Campbell. Boyds Mill Press. 32 pp. ISBN-10: 1620916274. The topic of fractals may seem too complex for young children, but Sarah Campbell has again shown her knack for showcasing natural phenomena by highlighting the mathematical underpinnings. Standard 2.

BEHOLD THE BEAUTIFUL DUNG BEETLE. 2014. Cheryl Bardoe. Illustrated by Alan Marks. Charlesbridge. 32 pp. ISBN-10: 1580895549. The unique role of this often-forgotten species is highlighted in both captivating watercolor paintings and factual but entertaining descriptions. Standard 3.

Third Grade

ANIMALS THAT MAKE ME SAY WOW. 2014. Dawn Cusick. Charlesbridge/Imagine Publishing. 80 pp. ISBN-10: 1623540410. Enhanced with photographs from the National Wildlife Federation, this book will engage readers with facts that showcase incredible adaptations and characteristics of animals. Standard 3.

BURIED SUNLIGHT. 2014. Molly Bang & Penny Chisholm. Illus. Molly Bang. The Blue Sky Press. 48pp. ISBN-10: 0545577853. A Caldecott-winning artist and an M.I.T. scientist join forces to help readers understand where fossil fuels come from and how they impact our planet. Standard 2.

Fourth Grade

EYE TO EYE: HOW ANIMALS SEE THE WORLD. 2014. Steve Jenkins. Illus. Steve Jenkins. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. 32pp. ISBN-10: 0547959079. Torn and cut-paper collage provides models of twenty different animals' eyes while text explains how animals use their eyes to find mates, to locate food, or to protect themselves. Standard 3.

MR. FERRIS AND HIS WHEEL. 2014. Kathryn Gibbs Davis. Illus. Gilbert Ford. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Books for Young Readers. 40pp. ISBN-10: 0547959222. This picture book biography details the engineering challenges faced by Mr. George Ferris as he was designing a structure for the 1893 Chicago World's Fair that still bears his name, the Ferris Wheel. Standard 4.

Fifth Grade

ZOOBOTS: WILD ROBOTS INSPIRED BY REAL ANIMALS. 2014. Helaine Becker. Illus. Alex Ries. Kids Can Press. 32pp. ISBN-10: 1554539714. Twelve animal-inspired robots that are in development at research labs across the world are showcased and the science behind them is described. Standard 4: Design a prototype that replaces a function of a human body part.

WINTER BEES: AND OTHER POEMS OF THE COLD. 2014. Joyce Sidman. Illus. Rick Allen. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. 32pp. ISBN-10: 0547906501. Beautifully crafted poetry, a wealth of scientific facts, and detailed linoleum prints convince readers that winter is not as barren as it seems at first glance. Standard 3.

Sixth Grade

ANIMAL STORIES: HEARTWARMING TALES FROM THE ANIMAL KINGDOM. 2014. Jane Yolen, et. al. Illus. Jui Ishida. National Geographic Kids. 160pp. ISBN-10: 1426317255. Prolific author Jane Yolen collaborates with her grown children to tell true stories of amazing animal acts of bravery, daring, and perseverance in a variety of biomes. Sidebars provide scientific facts about the animals. Standard 3.

WHEN LUNCH FIGHTS BACK: WICKEDLY CLEVER ANIMAL DEFENSES. 2014. Rebecca. L. Johnson. Millbrook Press. 48pp. ISBN-10: 1467721093. Relationships between a variety of predator and prey are described. Standard 3.

Primary Honorable Mention

AMAZING GIANT SEA CREATURES. 2014. DK. DK Children. 16 pp. ISBN-10: 1465419012
Typical high-quality graphics of DK books support the “fast fact” format of information about various aquatic species. Foldout pages with scaled drawings provide potential mathematical connections. Standard 3.

GRAVITY. 2014. Written and illustrated by Jason Chin. Roaring Book Press. 32 pp. ISBN-10: 1596437170. Chin succeeds with making the physical science topic of gravity accessible to young children through both text and illustrations. Endnotes provide deeper explanations about this topicEX. Standard 2.

STAR STUFF: CARL SAGAN AND THE MYSTERIES OF THE UNIVERSE. 2014. Stephanie Roth Sissen. Roaring Book Press. 40pp. ISBN-10: 1596439602. Simple text and engaging art describe Sagan's childhood wonderings about the cosmos. Detailed backmatter explains the science and provides additional resources for a more sophisticated reader. Standard 2.

Intermediate Honorable Mention

BATMAN SCIENCE: THE REAL-WORLD SCIENCE BEHIND BATMAN'S GEAR. 2014. Agnieszka Biskup and Tammy Enz. Batman created by Bob Kane. Capstone Young Readers. 144pp. ISBN-10: 1623700647. Batman's gadgets are showcased in full-color illustrations while textboxes explain the engineering and technology applications of similar devices in the real world. Standard 4.

IF...A MIND-BENDING NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT BIG IDEAS AND NUMBERS. 2014. David J. Smith. Illus. Steve Adams. Kids Can Press. 40pp. ISBN-10: 1894786343. Large concepts and numbers are scaled down in terms that young readers can grasp. Many of the ideas are scientific in nature such as the size of the planets, the history of the Earth, and the contents of the ocean, and resources of the Earth. Standard 2.

SUPER SNIFFERS: DOG DETECTIVES ON THE JOB. 2014. Dorothy Hinshaw Patent. Bloomsbury. 48pp. ISBN-10: 0802736181. Short stories explain the diverse ways dogs have been trained to use their noses to help others, from finding whale scat to predicting seizure activity in people. Standard 3.