

PALS Best Books of 2008



**Submissions from
Librarians in PALS
And Across Illinois**

Preschool/Primary Titles

- Bechtold, Lisze *Sally and the Purple Socks* 9780399247347
We've all owned socks that stretch and stretch, but Sally's grow to become winter scarves, curtains and rugs!
- Cottin, Menena *Black Book of Colors* 9780888998736
Living with the use of one's eyes can make imagining blindness difficult, but this innovative title invites readers to imagine living without sight through remarkable illustrations done with raised lines and descriptions of colors based on imagery. Braille letters accompany the illustrations and a full Braille alphabet offers sighted readers help reading along with their fingers. This extraordinary title gives young readers the ability to experience the world in a new way.
- Curtis, Jamie Lee *Big Words for Little People* 9780061127595 (2)
With grown-up words like cooperate, respect, patience and considerate, a big, boisterous and zany family celebrates the power of language and discovers that words—big *or* little—are the bridge that connects us all. Parents and children enjoy this book. The illustrations are great too!
- DiPucchio, Kelly and LeUyen Pham *Grace for President* 9780786839193
This lively picture book adroitly addresses the Presidential election process. It incorporates the theme that it is possible for a female to run and win elected office, coupled with an easily understood overview of how electoral votes are distributed and counted. I used it in conjunction with United Way's Operation Read after school program at a local elementary school with serves grades K-6. The book was a hit!
- Ferguson, Sarah, The Duchess of York *Teas for Ruby* 9781416954194 (2)
In this story Ruby prepares herself to have tea with the Queen. It talks about manners and how one should behave. The Queen turns out to be her grandma. The illustrations are done by Robin Preiss Glasser who also illustrates Fancy Nancy.
- Gravett, Emily *Monkey and Me* 9781416954576
This is a great book for story time. After just a few pages the children are saying the phrase, "Monkey and me. Monkey and Me. We went to see. We went to see..." right along with the reader. When you're finished they will want to, "Do it again!"
- Gray, Mini *Traction Man Meets Turbo Dog* 9780375855832
Great sequel to the book Traction Man! Traction Man braves the evil bin things in order to save Scrubbing Brush, who had been thrown away by the little boy's father and replaced with a battery-operated dog.
- Henkes, Kevin *Old Bear* 9780061552052 (2)
Old bear goes to sleep for the winter and dreams of spring. When he awakes, it is spring.
- Henson, Heather *That Book Woman* 9781416908128
Through the voice of a boy who helps his father on their dirt poor, rocky, and steep Appalachian farm, Heather Henson tells about the surprise of getting books delivered by a librarian on a horse. Aimed at five to eight year olds, this picture book depicts the true story of the Pack Horse Librarians.
- Howe, James *Houndsley and Catina in the Quiet Time* 9780763633844
Houndsley loves the quiet of the first snow of winter but Catina does not enjoy being snowed in. Houndsley helps Catina enjoy the beauty of the snowy day.

- Lies, Brian *Bats at the Library* 9780618999231
This book is a “must have” for every library.
- Matsuoka, Mei *Footprints in the Snow* 9780805087925
With so many books depicting mean, hungry wolves. Wolf decides to set the record straight by writing his own story featuring a kind wolf whose only interest in life is making friends. Unfortunately, Wolf’s appetite takes a bite out of his good intentions.
- O’Connor, Jane *Fancy Nancy Sees Stars* 9781439582787
When Nancy and her friend can’t get to the planetarium for a field trip, she comes up with a different way to see stars and have fun.
- Rubin, Adam *Those Darn Squirrels!* 9780547007038
(2)
When grumpy Old Man Fookwire builds feeders to try to keep birds – the only creatures he likes—from leaving for the winter, he finds himself in a battle with clever, crafty squirrels who want a share of the abundant food.
- Schwarz, Viviane *There are Cats in This Book* 978763639235
For all the cat lovers in the world and even those who aren’t, this is a delightful visit to the wonders of catdom.
- Smith, Lane *Madame President* 9781423108467
A little girl describes what a typical day would be like if she were President of the United States. A funny and witty book that is paired with great illustrations.
- Stubbs, Tommy *Thomas and Friends: Trains, Cranes & Troublesome Trucks*
9780375846770
A Thomas & Friends Story
- Willems, Mo *I Love My New Toy!* 9781423109617
Mo Willems continues his best-selling Elephant and Piggie first reader series. Piggie can’t wait to show Gerald her brand new toy. But will an accidentally broken toy accidentally break a friendship?

Intermediate Titles

- Appelt, Kathi *The Underneath* 9781416950585
An unlikely pair, a dog and a cat, share friendship and love.
- Balliett, Blue *The Calder Game* 9780439852074
- Clements, Andrew *Lost and Found* 9781416909859
Twelve-year-old identical twins Jay and Ray have long resented that everyone treats them as one person, and so they hatch a plot to take advantage of a clerical error at their new school and pretend they are just one.
- DiPucchio, Kelly and LeUyen Pham *Grace for President* 9780786839193
A classroom votes for president among the students and Grace only sees boys running. She wonders why a girl can’t be president.
- Dowell, Frances O’Roark *Shooting the Moon* 1416926909
Twelve year old Jamie is thrilled when her brother, TJ, joins the Army and heads to Vietnam. Now he can experience the excitement of battle and become a hero like their father, the Colonel. But the undeveloped film that TJ sends her develops into photographs that change Jamie’s perspective on war and her father.
- Duble, Kathleen Benner *Quest* 9781416933861

- Seventeen-year-old John Hudson sets sail aboard the *Discovery* with his father, Henry Hudson, eager to explore the open seas and the New World.
- Forester, Victoria *The Girl Who Could Fly* 9780312374624
This is a delightfully accessible fantasy for both boys and girls. Nicely developed characters and follow through.
- Funke, Cornelia *Inkdeath* 9780439866286
This is the third installment in the Inkheart trilogy.
- Haddix, Margaret Peterson *Found* 9781416954170
When thirteen-year-old Jonah and Chip, who are both adopted, learn they were discovered on a plane that appeared out of nowhere, full of babies with no adults on board, they realize that they have uncovered a mystery involving time travel and two opposing forces, each trying to repair the fabric of time. This is the first book in the Missing series.
- Hobbs, Will *Go Big or Go Home* 9780060741419
This is a good, fun book for reluctant readers.
- Kimmel, Jeff *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules* 9780810994737
Greg Heffley tells about his summer vacation and his attempts to steer clear of trouble when he returns to middle school and tries to keep his older brother, Rodrick, from telling everyone about Greg's most humiliating experience of the summer.
- Law, Ingrid *Savvy* 9780803733060
Mibs awaits her thirteenth birthday when she will come into her savvy- a magical talent.
- Long, Loren and Phil Bildner *Game 3 (Barnstormers)* 9781416918653
This is the third book in the series about three kids, a magic baseball, a huge debt and a traveling baseball team. Their father has died and it is up to his old buddies from the war to help the widow make money to pay the bills. In this third game they play in Chicago. They are starting to get used to the strange things that happen during the game when the ball is held by all three of them. But now there are thugs after them for the money that is owed. It is a mix of sports, magic and family that is a captivating mix of a story.
- Lowry, Lois *The Willoughbys* 9780618979745
After their parents abandon them and leave them in the care of a nanny, the four Willoughby children set out to become "deserving" orphans. A cleverly written and very funny book.
- McDonald, Megan *Judy Moody Goes to College* 9780763628338
A few sessions with a college-age math tutor turn Judy into a jargon-spouting polygon princess.
- Nielsen, Susin *Word Nerd* 9780887768750
Twelve-year old Ambrose has trouble making friends. Ambrose's over-protective mother decides that Ambrose will take correspondence classes from home after bullies almost kill Ambrose by slipping a peanut into his sandwich. But Ambrose strikes up an unlikely firendship with his landlords' son Cosmo through their mutual love of Scrabble.
- Palatini, Margie *Geek Chic: The Zoey Zone* 9780061138980
With only 198 days before the start of sixth grade, Zoey Zinevich embarks on a zany journey of self-discovery in her quest to become "cool." A fun book for junior readers.
- Pennypacker, Sara *Clementine's Letter* 0786838841

After learning that her favorite teacher will be leaving for a trip to Egypt and will be absent for the remainder of the year, Clementine devises a plan to get rid of the substitute and get Mr. D'Matz to stay.

- Reeve, Philip *Mothstorm* 9781599903033
More adventure of the Momby clan in outerspace.
- Riordan, Rick *Battley of the Labyrinth* 9781423101468
This is the fourth book in the Percy Jackson and the Olympians series.
- Riordan, Rick *Maze of Bones* 9780545090544
Book One in the 39 Clues series What would happen if you discovered that your family was one of the most powerful in human history? What if you were told that the source of the family's power was hidden around the world, in the form of 39 clues? What if you were given a choice - take a million dollars and walk away ... or get the first clue? If you're Amy and Dan Cahill, you take the clue - and begin a very dangerous race. Part treasure hunt, part mystery, this book starts off a series that features tidbits about Benjamin Franklin and other historical figures.
- Rodda, Emily *Key to Rondo* 9780545035354
Through an heirloom music box, Leo, a serious, responsible boy, and his badly-behaved cousin Mimi enter the magical world of Rondo to rescue Mimi's dog from a sorceress, who wishes to exchange him for the key that allows free travel between worlds.

Young Adult Titles

- Anderson, Jodi Lynn *Love and Peaches* 9780060733117
This is a sequel to the "Peaches" series. This is a good book for the teens who enjoyed "Sisters of the Travelling Pants".
- Basye, Dale *Heck: Where the Bad Kids Go* 9780375840753
A hilarious tale of a brother and sister who die and find themselves in Heck. While there, they are subjected to hilarious and terrible forms of torture. Will they escape?
- Bodeen, Stephanie A. *The Compound* 9780312370152
Fifteen-year-old Eli, locked inside a radiation-proof compound built by his father to keep the family safe following a nuclear attack, begins to question his future, as well as his father's grip on sanity as the family's situation steadily disintegrates over the course of six years.
- Bradbury, Jennifer *Shift* 1416947329
Two best friends go on a cross-country bike trek, and only one return. In this exciting debut, Bradbury delivers a tour de force about cycling, friendship, and the depths of loyalty.
- Bunce, Elizabeth C. *Curse as Dark as Gold* 9780439895767
Upon the death of her father, seventeen-year-old Charlotte struggles to keep the family's woolen mill running in the face of an overwhelming mortgage and what the local villagers believe is a curse, but when a man capable of spinning straw into gold appears on the scene she must decide if his help is worth the price.
- Cahore, Kristin *The Graceling* 9780152063962

- In a world where some people are born with extreme and often-feared skills called Graces, Katsa struggles for redemption from her own horrifying Grace, the Grace of killing, and teams up with another young fighter to save their land from a corrupt king.
- Collins, Suzanne *The Hunger Games* 9780439023481 (8)
- In a future North America, where the rulers of a Panem maintain control through an annual televised survival competition pitting young people from each of the twelve districts against one another, sixteen-year-old Katniss's skills are put to the test when she voluntarily takes her younger sister's place in a fight to the death. Collins has written a compulsively readable blend of science fiction, survival story, unlikely romance, and social commentary.
- Doctorow, Cory *Little Brother* 9780765319852 (2)
- Marcus, a.k.a. "w1n5t0n", is only seventeen years old, but he figures he already knows how the system works – and how to work the system. Smart, fast, and wise in the ways of the networked world, he has no trouble outwitting his high school's intrusive but clumsy surveillance systems. But his whole world changes when he and his friends find themselves caught in the aftermath of a major terrorist attack on San Francisco. In the wrong place at the wrong time, Marcus and his crew are apprehended by the Department of Homeland Security and whisked away to a secret prison where they're mercilessly interrogated for days. When the Department of Homeland Security finally releases them, Marcus discovers that his city has become a police state where every citizen is treated like a potential terrorist. He knows that no one will believe his story, which leaves him only one option: to take down the DHS himself.
- Green, John *Paper Towns* 9780525478188 (2)
- Quentin is a high school senior who spends an unforgettable, mischief filled night with his neighbor and longtime crush, Margo Roth Spiegelman. However, the night after their adventure Margo disappears.
- Johnson, Maureen *Suite Scarlett* 9780439899277
- Scarlett Martin's family owns the Hopewell Hotel, a once fabulous but now shabby and financially struggling Art Deco hotel in New York City. When each Martin turns fifteen they are given the responsibility of caring for one suite – cleaning, guest relations, anything short of problems requiring professionals. Scarlett's gift, the Empire Suite, comes with an unexpected surprise: Mrs. Amberson, a slightly eccentric, mysteriously wealthy former actress who arrives the day after Scarlett's birthday and plans to stay indefinitely. Soon Mrs. Amberson nearly gets her arrested for shoplifting before dragging her into a revenge plot against a former friend. Scarlett's got plenty of other things to worry about, including her brother Spencer's stalled acting career, her older sister Lola's mysterious behavior, and her bratty younger sister Marlene's health problems. Then Eric, an actor working with Spencer, shows up and Scarlett starts to think the summer might not be so bad after all.
- Kluger, Steve *My Most Excellent Year: a Novel, a Love, Mary Poppins, and Fenway Park* 9780803732278
- This is a wonderful school story about love, baseball, theater, political activism as seen through the eyes of three high school freshmen. This book also deals with one of the characters "coming out" in a very thoughtful and sensitive way. Loved it.
- Lupica, Mike *The Big Field* 9780399246258

- When fourteen-year-old baseball player Hutch feels threatened by the arrival of a new teammate named Darryl, he tries to work through the insecurities about both Darryl and his remote and silent father, who was once a great ballplayer too.
- Mclaughlin, Laruen *Cyclor* 0375851917
 Jill is a normal teenage girl, except she turns into a boy named Jack for 1 week a month. While Jill has a crush on the new boy at school (who is bisexual), Jack has a crush on Jill's best friend, Ramie. It deals a lot with gender and glbt issues, all in a fun, light and easy read. The sequel should be out next year.
- Meyer, Stephenie *Breaking Dawn* 031606792X (3)
 This is the final installment in the Twilight saga. It continues the story of the human Bella and the vampire Edward whose love is threatened by their difference, a werewolf named Jacob, and other outside influences. Although eighteen-year-old Bella joins the dark but seductive world of the immortals by marrying Edward the vampire, her connection to the powerful werewolf Jacob remains unsevered.
- Myers, Walter Dean *Sunrise over Fallujah* 9780439916240
 Private Robin Perry joins the army during his senior year in high school because "I felt like crap after 9-11 and I wanted to do something, to stand up for my country." In February 2003 he becomes part of the initial U.S. troop deployment in the second Iraq war. His story—told through a first-person account; honest, soul-searching letters to his uncle Richie (the protagonist of Myers's *Fallen Angels*, rev. 7/88); and cheerful missives to his mother—show a young man who starts his tour of duty optimistically, begins to wonder what the war is really about, and finally concludes that "we were is a war of complete randomness... There was no logic except the constant adding up of numbers. How many are dead? Robin takes readers behind the headlines to the everyday life of a soldier, an existence full of fear, bravery, boredom, confusion, compassion, and violence. His voice and perspective never waver from that of a young man trying to make so sense out of this tasks and duty.
- Paolini, Christopher *Brisingr* 9780375926723
 The further adventures of Eragon and his dragon Saphira as they continue to aid the Varden in the struggle against the evil king, Galbatorix.
- Patterson, James *The Dangerous Days of Daniel X* 9780316002929
 Fifteen-year-old Daniel has followed in his parents' footsteps as the Alien Hunter, exterminating beings on The List of Alien Outlaws on Terra Firma, but when he faces his first of the top ten outlaws, the very existence of Earth and another planet are at stake.
- Scott, Elizabeth *Living Dead Girl* 1416960597
 "Once upon a time, I was a little girl who disappeared. Once upon a time, my name was not Alice. Once upon a time, I didn't know how lucky I was. When Alice was ten, Ray took her away from her family, her friends, and her life. She learned to give up all power, to endure all pain. She waited for the nightmare to be over. Now Alice is fifteen and Ray still has her, but he speaks more and more of her death. He does not know it is what she longs for. She does not know he has something more terrifying than death in mind for her. This is Alice's story. It is one you have never heard, and one you will never, ever forget." – Book flap
- Witcomb, Laura *The Fetch* 0618891315
 Calder is a Fetch –an angel-like escort that leads the dying to the afterlife. After seeing a beautiful woman at a death scene, Calder returns to earth –into the chaos of the Russian

Revolution. This is a fascinating book that is appropriate for youth below YA age as well as young adults.

Non-Fiction Titles

Blake, Spencer *Spyology: Complete Book of Spycraft* 9780763640484 age 9-12

SPYODOLOGY can be read as an adventure story, as a manual for learning the craft of espionage, or leafed through item by item as it catches the reader's eye. It is a book that children (and adults) can easily get lost in!

Bryan, Kim *One Million Things: a Visual Encyclopedia* 9780756638436 3rd and up
Featuring gorgeous photographs that illustrate and educate, this visual encyclopedia is jam-packed with thousands and thousands of images that bring more than one million things to light.

Deen, Paula *Paula Deen's My First Cookbook* 9781416950332 Primary
This book is a Southern treat from the queen of the South, herself! It guides the youngest chef to create delicious food. There is even a chapter on manners!

Delano, Marf'e Ferguson *Helen's Eyes: A Photobiography of Annie Sullivan, Helen Keller's Teacher* 9781426302091 4th-8th

This is a wonderful book showing the early life of a very important person in Helen Keller's life. The hardships Annie Sullivan overcame as a child made her the strong adult she became. The pictures really transport you back to that life and time.

Denenberg, Barry *Lincoln Shot: A President's Life Remembered* 9780312370138 4th-8th (2)

This oversized book is illustrated so that it looks like an old newspaper complete with varied stories about Lincoln and the night he was shot—including the conspirators and their trial. It is a creative look at Lincoln and his death.

Faust, Drew Gilpin *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* 9780375404047

YA/AD

Explores the material, political, intellectual, and spiritual impact of the enormous loss of life resulting from the American Civil War, and looks at how military personnel and civilians dealt with the carnage on both practical and spiritual levels.

Fry, Jason *Star Wars: The Clone Wars: The Visual Guide* 9780756641214

Gladwell, Malcom *Outliers: The Story of Success* 9780316017923
Adult

The bestselling author of *Blink* identifies the qualities of successful people, posing theories about the cultural, family, and idiosyncratic factors that shape high achievers, in a resource that covers such topics as the secrets of software billionaires, why certain cultures are associated with better academic performance, and why the Beatles earned their fame.

Guinness World Records Gamer's Ed 2008 9781904994213 6th-up

This is the ultimate annual guide to the greatest computer and video game facts and feats. Also featuring interviews with champion gamers, hints and tips to improve your gameplay, profiles of the world's best-selling titles, and features on the latest games and consoles and much more

Erika Blackburn	Dixon Public Library
Susan Bohn	Hononegah High School
Joyce Bolda	Franklin Park Public Library
Mary Bradshaw	Sterling Public Library
DeDe Brenszewski	New Lenox School District
Natalie Bromann	Glenside Public Library District
Michael Camillo	Sterling High School CUSD #5
Dawn Cannon	Lincoln School Sterling CUSD #5
Sarah Carlin	Scott County Library System
Rose Cook	Oswego Public Library
Anita Elgin	Sterling Public Library
Denise Ethun	Boylan Catholic High School
Lois Feldman	Morris Area Public Library
Penelope Friedberg	Nippersink Public Library
Ada Gallagher	Flewellin Memorial Library
John Gillette	Bettendorf Public Library
Teri Graszner	Johnsburg Junior High School
Hinckley Public Library	
Peggy Jencius	Talcott Free Library
Katie	Messenger Public Library
Valerie LaBerge	Sandwich District Library
Jean Langkamp	Harlem Middle School/ Harlem Cons Dist. 122
Michelle McAlvey	Walnut Public Library District
Beth McCormick	Dixon Public Library
Ruth Anne Mielke	Bartlett Public Library
Annette Mills	Triad Community Unit #2
Kathy Parker	Seneca Grade School #170/Seneca High School #160
Kate Pierson	Glen Ellyn Public Library
Judy Poppen	Ella Johnson Memorial Library
Shari Potter	Plainfield CSD #202
Sue Reed	Dixon Public Library
Kathleen Schaefer	Dixon Public Library
Kay Schuette	Louis Latzer Kaeser Children's Library
Jane Stahl	Winnebago Public Library
Gwen Thompson	Joliet Central High School
Alicia Tippins	Marengo Comm. HS Dist. 154
Barbara Trapp	Moline Public Library
Sharon Peterson	Bureau Valley District #340
Joanne Newton	Rockford Public Library
Lisa Powell Williams	Moline Public Library
Carol Woeckel	Fountaindale Public Library District
Laura Yanchick	Joliet Public Library – Black Road